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EDITORIAL

A BUNCH OF TELL-TALE LETTERS

C. A. Abraham

THE RUHANUTHA OF THE CHALDEO-INDIAN CHURCH

Kuriakose Elias Vadaketh

THE LIST OF THE BISHOPS OF THE THOMAS CHRISTIANS

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THE EXTRAORDINARY SYNOD OF BISHOPS (1985) AND THE
ORIENTAL CHURCHES IN INDIA

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE THEOLOGY OF THE RESURRECTION
SERVICE IN THE SYRO-MALANKARA CHURCH

K. Valuparampil

CHRISTIAN ORIENT

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SPIRITUALITY

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Editorial

The Task of Oriental Theology in the Indian Context

Introduction

We are living in a world where people try to reduce theology to a given "situation" or "time" or "place" or "country" or "culture" or even to a "social or political or economical" problem. They lay, perhaps, an overemphasis on making theology "relevant" in its task, method and language to all the "needs of modern man". Hence we are forced to ask: What is the primary task of theology in the Indian context? Is it the search for "relevance" or for "Truth"? Is it the search for words "adequate to God" or "adequate to man"? What is the source and object of theology? God? Man? Heaven? World? Has Oriental theology anything to contribute to theologizing in the Indian context?

It is also a time when people sit down to write theologies on all possible objects or subjects. A few years back, "death of God" was a favourite theme for theologians; today they have taken up even secularism and atheism as objects for theology. It is in this context that the readers of *Christian Orient* are invited to reflect upon the task of theology itself. It appears to me that the Christian theology can propose itself as really "relevant" only when it remains a scandal to the Jews, foolishness to the Greeks, and at odds with this world and its passing "cultures and modernities".

This does not mean that theology operates in a cultural vacuum. To depend on the world is quite different from to be related to it. The acceptance of the world as the only criterion of theology today is to be rejected. At the same time, we repeat and affirm that "to be related to the world" is the *raison d'être* of theology. If the fundamental characteristics of genuine theology, namely, its pastoral, missionary and prophetic dimensions, were ignored, then theology becomes a mere intellectual game, which disregards the "real" Church and caters for the vested interests of a few.

The task of theology at any given time is necessarily determined by the needs of the Church, and a true theologian in the Church is recognised by the power he has to discern the real needs of the Church at a given place and time. This is relevant and imperative also to all theologians in India. When theologizing in the Indian context today, the total history of the Church in India is also to be considered in depth.

The Latin Church with her Western theological tradition is a colonial accretion and of recent addition to the Indian situation. With all the good will and earnest attempt from the part of Latin theologians to Indianize it, it remains and has to remain for good, foreign and alien to the cultural heritage of India. The reason is obvious: It is an apostolic Christian synthesis of Rome (the Law of Peter) according to the cultural patterns mostly of Europe.

Of course, it is universal in its character. But it can never be compared with the apostolic Christian synthesis of the Thomas Christians (the Law of Thomas), which is in tune with the cultural patterns of India and Asia. By this very fact, this Law of Thomas remains normative for any further theologizing in the Indian context.

In this connection, let us not ignore the pronouncement of the present President of India, Giani Sail Singh, who affirmed that the Thomas Christian community had "added a new dimension to India's rich cultural heritage". He was speaking on October 26, 1983, inaugurating the Paurastya Vidyapitham, Vadavathoor, Kottayam:

"Christianity in India dates back to the days of St. Thomas, one of the original disciples of Lord Jesus. Since then, it has flourished here and added a new dimension to India's rich cultural heritage. With deep root in the soil, Indian Christianity has developed an independent personality of its own - Christian in religion, Oriental in worship and Indian in culture. This local character has been sustained, and enriched over the last many centuries."

The task of Oriental theologians in India today, is also determined by the fact that their tradition was disfigured during the colonial and imperialistic period, and that they are now historically conditioned to live among the Latin and the non-Christian religious traditions, diverse cultural exigencies including even that of secularism, and pluralistic "world-views".

Theology and Theologies

What is Christian theology? According to Karl Rahner, the leading theologian in the West, "it is essentially the conscious effort of the Christian to hearken to the actual verbal revelation which God has promulgated in history, to acquire a knowledge of it by the methods of scholarship and to reflect upon its implications". "Real theology has as its basis an undistorted hearing of God's word with a view to salvation, ultimately in the service of salvation itself". In the *Sacramentum Mundi*, he defines theology as "the science of faith", "the conscious and methodical explanation and explication of the divine revelation received and grasped in faith". In short, theology, for him, "is a science of the Christian faith", which is ecclesiastical, political and historical. Its formal object is "God in his Godhead", as St. Thomas Aquinas explains it. This is the perception of theology in the Western Church, where the emphasis is more on the reflection of God, and which makes the faith a *teaching* rather than a personal response to the divine call in and through Jesus Christ. Even Yves Congar, who had familiar contacts with Eastern Fathers, repeatedly asserted that there is "no theology for man without an anthropology for God".

When the Westerners start theology with anthropology, the Easterners start from the realm of redemption in a doxological attitude. Hence theology is something "mystical" in the East; there they stress more on the experience of God than on mere reflection. The Christ-event, for them, is not simply a source of knowledge, but an act of divine love and forgiveness that creates a totally new existential situation for man. What is important here is the experiential knowledge of God, than mere intellectual knowledge of him. Faith,

as they explain it, is a personal commitment and personal adherence to a personal God who has revealed himself in history in the person of Jesus Christ. Thus theology in the East is a peak experience of Jesus Christ which happens in the life of prayer. Hence Evagrius (+ 399) wrote: "The one who has purity in prayer is true theologian, and the one who is true theologian has purity in prayer".

The Easterners appear to make a distinction between theology and theological teaching. While theology is understood as the real *gnosis*, the existential experience of God, especially in silence and contemplation, theological teaching consists in reasoning and scientific exposition of the experiential knowledge of God. According to St. Issac the Syrian, a true theologian speaks the language of the world to come, while theological teaching is made for historical work here below.

It is because of this special theological perception that the Easterners never like to imprison theology in any systematic structure. Although it reasons out, it has to go often beyond the concepts. In deeper research, theology for them is the capacity or skill to adapt one's thought and reasoning to the existential experience of revelation in Jesus Christ, and to find out skillful and inspired words in the language of the context for conveying that experience. That is why the Liturgy, which is the existential experience of revelation in Jesus Christ, is considered to be the *locus classicus* of theology in the East.

Theology and Worship

The emphasis on Liturgy as the source and object of theology is typical of all Eastern tradition. A Westerner can digest it only when he succeeds to enter into the Eastern ethos and discern the place given to Liturgy in those traditions. Liturgy is the *focus*, the *Holy of holies*, the *principal occupation* of all Eastern Churches. It is understood to be the celebration of salvation, the celebration of the real Christian existence. Liturgy, for them, is not a human attempt to contact God, but a celebration of how God has touched man, a celebration of how God has united man to himself, a celebration of how God is ever present to man and how he dwells sacramentally in and with man.

This basic liturgical vision is eclipsed even among the Easterners today because of the "western captivity" of eastern theology. This is explained by scholars as a tragedy that happened in eastern traditions during the post-Patristic age. According to the eminent Orthodox theologian, Fr. George Florovsky, this "western captivity" consists primarily in the *pseudomorphosis* of eastern theological mind in such a way that it adopts fully or unconditionally the western thought forms and categories, the western understanding of the very nature, structure and even method of theology. Consequently, the liturgy has ceased to be the living experience of our salvation. At the same time, everybody thirsts after such an experience in religion. Many people think that they can easily solve this problem through a few hasty and superficial liturgical reforms, and naturally they fall into the growing tendencies of today, namely, nominalism, minimalism, exhibitionism, humanism, secularism, and the like.

The Liturgy has become extremely superficial; it doesn't touch the man; even the ministers are not touched by it; it is degraded to the level of

reciting a few prayers, expressing a few ideas, giving vent to a few personal emotions, a forum for briefing certain events or accidents or activities, or fulfilling an obligation.

Eventhough the essentials are preserved in the liturgical texts (in some cases that too are destroyed), in practice they disappear little by little. Everywhere there happens a process of selection and rejection, which ought to be justified to some extent; but if it happens without any consideration to the original and authentic genius of the particular liturgical tradition and that too by each individual, it becomes detrimental to the Church. The ordinary faithful, especially since they were kept away from the authentic traditions for a long period, may not notice and recognize this *rapid erosion*; but the scholars who can easily detect such serious situations can never keep silence.

Liturgy which ought to be the life of the Church, is now thrown to a corner; it is considered only as one among the many activities of the Church. It is not given any role in shaping and guiding the ecclesiastical consciousness or the Christian "philosophy of life", in shaping and guiding our ideas, attitudes and actions. Liturgy is confined to the church-building; it has no impact outside. All other activities in the Church or Eparchy or Parish or of individuals are almost based on and guided by purely secular values or pre-suppositions or logics.

Liturgy is no more understood and explained as the *icon* or *image* of the *new life*, a Christian has participated in and to the fullness of which he is constantly striving. Consequently the sacred liturgy has been reduced to the level of sentimental pietism or that of mere secular or profane celebration. This is the real situation, though in varying degrees, in all the different Churches in India – a real divorce between the *lex orandi* (liturgy) and the *lex credendi* (theology), and both these from the actual life of the Church. Only in this particular context can we think today about the task of theology in the Indian context.

Theology and Faith.

The task of theology, as the Easterners understand it, is the authentic interpretation of the faith of the Church, namely, the orderly and consistent presentation, explication and defense of faith. Faith, for them, is both the source and object of theology. Hence, even the structure and method of theology depends on the faith of the Church, i. e., the faith of each individual Church according to her own particular synthesis. It is here that we come across the radical difference between the East and the West in theological perception.

It was in the West first (of course, due to the reasons inherent to the western cultural, religious and intellectual development) that the source of the theology (the faith of the Church) began to be identified with a specific number of *data*, mainly texts (scriptural, patristic, conciliar, etc.) as *loci theologici* of theological speculation. Since the western mind was bent on constructing an *objective* or *scientific* or *systematic* theology, it tried to base it on objective and clearly defined foundations. Thus there happens, first of all, an identification of *faith* with certain *propositions*, and secondly (very serious and even dangerous) a rejection from the theological process, any reference to or dependence upon the living experience of the Church.

But, faith is essentially a commitment to a living experience, an *apostolic Christ-experience*. Theology is, rather, a description or an explanation of this living experience of the Church; and not a definition of it. It is difficult or rather impossible to define an experience; it may be described or explained to a certain extent, and that too only through *words and actions*. Thus *theology* is a search for concepts, words and gestures, adequate to and expressive of the *living experience* of the Church. The *living experience*, therefore, is more important than any number of *propositions*. That is why some of the eminent Easterners such as Vladimir Lossky prefer to call theology always with a qualification – “mystical theology”.

The *criteria* of theology, therefore, lie not merely on its formal and autonomous “authorities”, but more in its adequacy to and consistency with the inner life and experience of the Church. This understanding of theology stems from the very nature of its *source* i. e., the *faith* of the Church.

The faith on which the Church is founded and by which she lives, is not merely an assent to certain “doctrines”, but a living relationship to certain events, such as the *Incarnation-Epiphany*, Life, Suffering, Death-Resurrection-Ascension, and Pentecost, – a relationship which makes the Church a constant *-witness* and *participant* of these events, of their saving, redeeming, life-giving and life-transforming reality. The Church has, indeed, no other experience than that of these events, and no other life but the *new life*, which they continuously generate and communicate. Thus the faith, naturally, can never be detached from this living experience; nay, this experience is the faith, the *experience* of that “which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands” (1 Jn 1, 1).

None of *these events* can be really known from a mere rational analysis or research into them. Only an experience which reveals their reality and makes us “witnesses to them” can induce others to believe in them; and theology in the east is the description of this experience, its revelation, in human concepts, words and gestures.

The Church is not merely an institution to safeguard certain divinely revealed *doctrines* and *learnings* about this or that past salvific event or of historic Christ-event as such; but she is the very *Epiphany* of them all. She can authentically share that *original* experience *here and now*, because she herself is the *Bet-Gazza*, “Treasure-House” of that experience. Her faith as theology (*lex credendi*) is always rooted in her faith as living experience (*lex orandi*).

This experience of the Church is primarily *received*, *deepened* and *shared* in her Liturgy. The greatest tragedy today, perhaps, is that we are to defend and prove this thesis. This is another regretful result of the *pseudomorphosis* of eastern theological mind. Centuries long “western captivity” did not only alter the theological mind, but tragically narrowed down, and obscured the very concept and experience of liturgy in the Church; quite naturally, the place and function of liturgy within the life of the Church too were detrimentally ignored.

Theology and the Orientals in the Indian Context

The Orientals have a magnificent pastoral responsibility today in the process of theologizing in the Indian context. This was ignored for several centuries. But, inspite of all other vicissitudes of history, the Orientals in India

managed to preserve most of their liturgical sources and the world-vision based on them. However, the long period of colonization, imperialism and "western captivity" have marred them considerably. The force of western and scholastic formation has really brought them to a radical situation, where even most of their theologians find it difficult to accept the real ethos of their proper liturgy, spirituality, theology, morality, ethics, discipline, etc. As the integration of the different situations of life progresses, this difficulty too becomes acute. Most of the Oriental intellectuals today in India appear to play the second fiddle for western theology; and that too under the pretext of theologizing in the Indian context.

The Faith, if it is to be true to itself, must be consciously accepted, clearly understood in its implications for life, and constantly defended against the pressures of secularism, humanism and false nationalism. It is here, therefore, that theology is called to recover its pastoral dimension, to supply or rather to be, that understanding, that essential link between the Tradition of the Church and real life, to assure the acceptance of the faith by the faithful.

What we mean is not to bring theology to a mere "popular level". On the contrary, we intend the uplifting of the whole life of the Church into a theological consciousness. In this context, first of all, we have to rectify a basic defect of the present theology, which is highly, "academic" and "scholastic". and cares little for the "practical needs" of the Church. The Fathers of the Church are very good examples in this respect. Surely, they were not less intellectual; but they differ, perhaps radically, from the so-called modern theologians. To them, what we call "practical" and what the modern theologians exclude in their intellectual game, was the unique concern of Christianity, namely, "the eternal salvation of man." They were not simply concerned with Truth and Error in general; but precisely with the *Truth that saves* and error that kills. It is their constant and truly "existential" preoccupation with, and their total commitment to the salvation of the real and concrete man that makes everything they produced so serious and their theology so vital and precisely pastoral. They were not mere arm-chair theologians and were not addressing to "intellectuals" only, but to everyone in the Church, conceived as true "theologian", namely, the one concerned with God. Their ideas are always referred to the "practical needs" of the Church, revealed in their soteriological significance.

In order to recover the pastoral dimension of theology, there must be a change in the inner orientation of the theologian first, of his theological mind, of the basic theological concern itself. First of all, we must aim our theological effort at the "real Church" and at the "real man" in her. We must also care about the situation of that man and not only about his becoming "more educated" and proud of his ecclesial affiliation. As long as we ourselves are not convinced that most of the ideas and philosophies by which he lives today lead him practically to spiritual death, and that the knowledge and experience of Truth are to save him, and not merely to adorn our Church with a respectable intellectual elite or purely humanists, we will certainly fail to find out words and expressions which can reach him. Theology is not a luxury symbol or luxury game.

This means that theology today has to begin with a deep evaluation and an unbiased critique of the "cultures" in which the Orientals find themselves and which seem to make their Churches irrelevant. Here again the

Fathers of the Church give us good examples. It was not accidental that they fixed the roots of their theology in sound apologetics – defense of faith against its internal and external enemies. We too have to fight today almost the same battle as those of the Fathers, but politely and smiling at the truly destructive implications of several modern philosophies, ideologies and theories. Most of us are unaware of the fact that under the grip of such philosophies and ideologies even some of the basic Christian “terms” are used today with almost opposite significance: eg., ‘salvation’ means today, ‘self-fulfilment’; ‘sin’ has become a personal problem of adjustment; ‘religion’, ‘liturgy’, etc., are evaluated according to one’s own psychological needs, and so on.

This kind of false formation mislead even the truly religious men and make them incapable of discerning the authentic teachings of the Church. Since most of our seminarians are imbued with such philosophies and ideologies, this **pseudomorphosis** happens even in the preachings of our ordinary priests and in the village parishes. In this context, we have to repeat what the Fathers did in patristic age – an exorcism of dangerous philosophies and deviating cultural impacts. We are not to strain to make our theology more “acceptable” to the so-called “modern man” and his “culture”, but on the contrary, to make him aware of the ultimately serious, truly soteriological nature and demands of his faith. This appears to be the most important task of theology today – to be identified with the Church and her life, and to be attentive to the real needs of man.

The missionary or ecumenical dimension of theology is also to be revived in the present Indian context. The Orientals have always emphasized this particular dimension. It is the capacity of theology to be open to all cultures and situations, but without sacrificing anything of its original and ecclesial characteristics. It consists in relating itself to any situation in which it finds itself, and not in taking in everything that comes across.

The prophetic dimension of theology too is very important. It consists in reminding the people of God of their true mission, namely, to witness to the faith they profess and denounce everything that is against the will of God. Immersed in human history, the Church is always tempted to the ways of this world, seduced to make compromises and accommodations with the spirit of the world. She is very often forced to prefer “peace” to Truth, “efficiency” to rectitude, “human success” to the will of God, and so on. True theologians can never remain silent in such situations. They have to speak against all kinds of injustice in the Church or in the society. Still, they have no right to dictate or govern; but only the sacred duty to illumine the hierarchy with the pure teachings of the Church, and to court even martyrdom for the truth of those teachings. Theologians are to be prophetic, but being obedient to the lawful authority in the Church.

Conclusion

When we think of theologizing in the Indian context, we can in no way ignore the being and history of the three individual Churches in India – the Latin, Malankara and Chaldeo-Indian Churches, and the two global Christian traditions – the Eastern and the Western. The Western theology and its specialities are well familiar to the Indians today. But the Oriental theology and its manifold specialities are foreign and alien to most of the modern Indians. At the same time, we know that the Oriental Christian genius and especially

that of the Thomas Christians, is quite in tune with the Indian mind. This abnormal situation is to be rectified first, before we proceed with the theologizing process in the Indian context.

A few lines from, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Churches*, by Vladimir Lossky appear to be worth quoting in this particular context;

“However, the theological expressions of this revealed truth, though they are not in any way contradictory one of another, often differ even within the traditions of East and West. St. Augustine takes as his starting point the image of God in man, and attempts to work out an idea of God, by trying to discover in Him that which we find in the soul created in His image. The method he employs is one of psychological analogies applied to the knowledge of God, to theology. On the other hand, St. Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, starts with what revelation tells us of God in order to discover what it is in man which corresponds to the divine image. This is a theological method applied to the knowledge of man, to anthropology. The first way seeks to know God by starting from man created in His image; the second wishes to define the true nature of man by starting from the idea of God in whose image man has been created”.

East and West have different theological approaches to the same reality. There are again individual ecclesial specifications within these global traditions. Since India is an Oriental country, and all the philosophies which sprouted and developed there, are in tune with the Oriental genius, the Christian theology most appropriate to Indian mind is the Oriental theology. Hence the task of Oriental theology in the Indian context!

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A Bunch of Tell - Tale Letters

This is a response to the latest memorandum submitted to the Holy Father on behalf of the Latin hierarchy in India entitled, "Further Documentation on Latin-Oriental Relations and the Mission of the Church in India". This consists of a bunch of letters, mostly from some Syro Malabar laymen and priests serving the Archdiocese of Madras and one from the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Bangalore. These letters were forwarded to the Holy Father in March 1985 with a memorandum signed by 16 Latin Bishops, all members of the Standing Committee of the C.B.C.I.

The most obvious inference about this latest anti Oriental missive of the venerable Bishops, is that they seem to be desperately looking for new props! How else could they so eagerly press into service the sort of letters they have now put together as valuable documents?

I

Laymen's Letters

Let us first examine the laymen's letters in support of the Latin posture. A close look at these letters will convince anyone that they are tell-tale documents. *They are in fact an indictment of Latin policies towards the orientals!* Let us see how this happens. In a letter addressed to the Secretary General of the C.B.C.I. (dated 10 January 1985) Mr. P.A. Joseph, conv-

ener, Kerala¹ Catholic Association of Madras, states as follows:-

- (1) ".....Our children are born into the Latin Rite, i.e., they are born to Syro-Malabar parents who have adopted and are practising Latin rite. They are baptized and confirmed in Latin Rite. Syrian Rite liturgy and rituals are foreign to them.....The younger generation do not like the Syro-Malabar Rite."²

The Latin Bishops have their stamp of approval for this candid confession! But juxtapose this with their own solemn declaration in their covering letter to the Holy father:

"We want to note that the Latin Bishops are well aware of the supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Rites. We are conscious of the role of the Spirit who nurtures all the diversities within the church"

Who is kidding who? The Latin Bishops assure the Holy Father that they are "well aware of the supreme importance to foster and preserve the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern rites." Surely, they must also be equally well aware of the fact that under their pastoral care the Orientals are alienated from their own sacred patrimony and are being steadily latinised. The Bishops seem dangerously

1. I am intrigued to know why Mr Joseph, who repudiates his ties with his mother Church, prefers to retain the 'Kerala' tag for his Association! Is that not an impediment for unity with the Tamils?
2. *Further Documentation...* p. 27. For a critical analysis of this memorandum, see V Pathikulangara, "*Further Documentation on Latin-Oriental Relation and the Mission of the Church in India*"?, (Kottayam: Denha Services, 1985).

close to Orwellian *double-speak*.³ The contradiction is climaxed when the Latin Bishops take on the role of protectors of the oriental diaspora and relay to the Holy Father, "the cry of the faithful outside Kerala painfully articulated in their letters". (These be thy gods, O, Isreal!) The Orientals had all along been led up the garden path with solemn assurances that proper provision would be made in the Latin dioceses for the spiritual ministry and pastoral care of the Orientals. The Madras letters make it abundantly clear that the consequences of Latin care of the Orientals have been totally ruinous to the latter. These letters, far from supporting the status quo, are a severe indictment of the declared Latin policies and their undeclared practices which are the "hidden curriculum" as it were.

If in Madras, which is only a few hundred kilometers from Kerala, were the presiding Archbishop is reputed to be a generous soul with some sympathy for Orientals and under whom there are at least 44 priests who were originally Orientals a section of the Syro-Malabar laity could be so effectively alienated from and turned against their Oriental patrimony and against their own Oriental Bishops in so short a time, the situation in other parts of India may well be imagined!

The Oriental Catholics in India have a simple and direct question to put to the Latin hierarchy in India and to the superiors in Rome. Are they wanting to Latinise the Orientals in India and turn them against their own Bishops and their ecclesial heritage? In the face of compelling evidence to the effect that Latin arrangements for the pastoral care of the Orientals have steadily and surely tended not only to latinise them but also to make them

inimical to their own heritage, is it fair or just to block the Oriental efforts to reach out their own people where they have migrated in large numbers? To deny the Oriental churches this fundamental right to minister to their own people is against the spirit of Catholicism. It is contrary to all civilized codes of human law. It is violative of the Indian Constitution. It would be a distortion of the equality between the Latin church and the Eastern churches proclaimed by Vatican II. All talk about the "unity of the church" and the "Indian Reality" seem to be a smokescreen for the strategy of latinising the orientals and of keeping them as mere appendages of the Latin church.

It is significant that in their communications to the Oriental Bishops the Madras letter-writers do not mention that they or their children have become aliens to the Oriental heritage. This cup, they must have felt, *will cheer only the Latin Secretary General of the C. B. C. I.* In their letters to the Oriental Bishops, on the other hand, these gentlemen state that the Latin diocese is taking good care of them even to the extent of putting on occasionally holy Qurbana in Malayalam. (What more can you ask for?) The chief arguments they hurl at the Syro-Malabar Bishops are the following:

- (2) *If Oriental Dioceses or parishes are set up in Madras (and other places outside Kerala) that will lead to Sree Lankan type conflicts" or lead to "murder and massive destruction" as in Delhi after the assassination of Indira Gandhi.*⁵

Even the genuine Latin spokesmen have never projected such gruesome scenarios. It is a matter for

3. Cf. Thomas Vellilamthadam, *African Payal. Towards a Mental Breakthrough in the Latin Connection of Indian Catholicism* (Kottayam: 1984), p. 17 n. 20.

4. *Further Documentation...* p. 3.

5. *Ibid.* p. 25.

some relief, however, that the Madras correspondents have not predicted a world war or star wars as a consequence of setting up a few Oriental Catholic Dioceses or parishes in some cities of the vast sub-continent of India. The Latin spokesmen in India are usually tempted to exaggerate (and even invent) Rite conflicts and make them a pretext for perpetrating the Latin monopoly in India. This is only a clever ruse. The cause of conflicts is within persons, not Rites. People have to be human and Christian before they can be truly Catholic. Otherwise there will be conflicts even within a single Rite under a single jurisdiction. Can we not live together in unity while we belong to our individual churches under the same Holy Father? Can we not live in harmony with our separated brethren, too? It is in fact the denial of freedom and justice that often lead to conflicts and not diversity of Rites. Even in Madras there has existed a flourishing Syro-Malankara Catholic parish (with a High school under its auspices) for the last 12 years and there has not been a single instance of conflict between them and the Latins. India is the land of diverse cultures and languages and if there is one country where diversity can inhere in unity it is India. If there is one Church that can witness to diversity within unity and universality, it is the Catholic Church. Yet when Orientals are Latinised, they, too, seem to fall in love with a monolithic church structure which is far from the Oriental or the truly Catholic faith perspective. The Madras letters confirm this sad truth.

- (3) *Another argument against the extension of Oriental ministration, used in the Madras letters, is that it will adversely affect the interests of the Orientals in education, employment, promotion and business.*

So this is where the shoe pinches! Surely, the non-Catholic Christians

and the non-Christians in Madras and elsewhere will not count against the Orientals the setting up of Oriental parishes or Dioceses. They have high regard for the St. Thomas Christians. The fear expressed in the letters, then, is that the Latins might deny them the privileges their children enjoy in Latin schools and that their bosses who happen to be Latins might stop being benevolent. This certainly, is not a compliment to the Latin brethren about whose Christian charity the letter-writers have formed a high opinion. The help the Latins offer to the Orientals, then, has strings attached to it? Are the Latin benefactors so mean as to trade some worldly benefits to the Orientals in exchange for their giving up their rich and distinctive spiritual patrimony? Can the Orientals be so devoid of self-respect as to barter away their heritage for crumbs? To exchange their birth-right for a mess of pottage? Why should the bond of Christian brotherhood and charity be weakened consequent on a separate set up for the Orientals? If the Latins become antagonistic to the Orientals merely because the Orientals wish to organise their own parishes, it certainly shows a distorted understanding of Christianity on their part.

After all, the Orthodox and the non-Catholic Christians, who live in Madras and other cities in India, organize their lives according to their own traditions without any particular help from the Latins. The Orthodox, whose number is smaller than that of the Syro-Malabar, both in Kerala and outside, manage to educate their children and thrive in business in all these places. The Oriental Catholics should be in a happier position because their Latin brethren will come to their aid. If, however, the aid is proffered with strings attached, namely that Orientals should let themselves be Latinized and train their children as aliens to their heritage,

no self-respecting Oriental Catholic will have any hesitation in spurning that aid.

- (4) *Another grouse of the Madras correspondents is that they (the laity) have not been consulted when important decisions (like the extension of the Church's ministry) are taken.*

Apparently their complaint is only about the Oriental Bishops. I presume the Latin Bishops had consulted them before taking important decisions such as, for example, latinising the Orientals and their children. Whatever be their experience in the Latin fold, I do share the agony of the laity in not being properly consulted on matters pertaining to the administration and organisational life of the Church. In the Orthodox and Mar Thoma churches in India there is a much greater degree of participation by the people in the life of their churches. This was generally so among the St. Thomas Christians in India before the Latin impact upon this church and this value has to be recovered in the life of the Catholic Church including the Orientals in India.

To come back to the point of the argument, what, perhaps, the letter writers mean in this context is that their anti-Oriental stand was not acceptable to Mar Antony Padiyara, the Apostolic Visitor.⁶ If there is a considerable number of Oriental Catholics in Madras who do not share the prejudiced perspective of the letter writers and who want Oriental parishes to be organized in Madras, will the letter writers show Christian charity towards them or declare war on them? That will be a true test of their Christianity and their professions of unity. They have a right to be asked to be

left alone, albeit for wrong reasons. But who has given them the mandate to impose their minority view on others and hold out veiled threats of "projecting the issue on a national and political level"? They should know that the Indian Constitution declares that "every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right to manage its own affairs in matters of religion." (Article 26 (2)) It is also, perhaps, good to remember that the government of India might not always take its orders from the Latin church in India or from the Latinised Orientals!

- (5) *The Madras letter writers fear that if the Syro-Malabar jurisdiction is extended to Madras, the members of that Church "will have compulsorily to go to Syro-Malabar Rite church for Baptism and marriage. What a hardship will that alone be to the people living in various parts of the city?"*

This points to a practical problem, but it is highly inflated. After all, how often do people go to church for baptisms and marriages? If people can daily commute to their places of work even from areas outside the city, will they find it a great hardship to travel once a year or less for baptisms and marriages or once a week for worship to the church? In any case, the practical difficulty of making long journey will exist only so long as there is a solitary Syro-Malabar church for the whole city of Madras. When there are more churches, as the Syrian Orthodox have in Madras, Bombay and other cities, the problem will vanish. The fact that the letter writers have deliberately exaggerated a small practical problem in order to oppose Oriental parishes, shows that

6. Since Mr P. A. Joseph and company quote from the confidential Report of Archbishop Padiyara to the Holy Father, one is tempted to ask who put this Report into their hands.

either they have a closed mind regarding the larger issues concerning the Oriental Church or that they are ignorant about them. Whether one agrees with the Madras letter writers or not, it is absolutely clear that they will never be acceptable as the spokesmen for the Orientals. I am sorry to say that the tenor of their letters show them up as Cat's Paw.

II

Letter of 44 priests⁷

One of the documents submitted to Rome by the Latin Bishops is a letter from 44 priests, originally Oriental but now Latin, to the Syro-Malabar Bishop of Irinjalakuda on the occasion of his visit to Madras. These priests, too, share the views of the laymen which we have already examined. The additional points they make are (1) Faith is above Rite, (2) Oriental separation will disintegrate the present Archdiocese, (3) it will create a chain reaction in the minds of Latin Rite clergy as well as the laity, (4) it will diminish the chance of priest from Kerala serving the Latin Rite laity in Madras and elsewhere in the country.

1) The first obvious thing about this letter is that it reflects merely the mental and emotional construct of those Orientals who have parasited for long on Latin modes of thinking. These Fathers have had a thoroughly Latin training and they have been working for and living with the Latins for many years. They probably have nothing Oriental about them today except their names! If, therefore, the 44 Fathers appear more Latin than the Latins that is no cause for surprise. What one fails to appreciate is their compulsions to be anti-Oriental. Perhaps, the fears they have themselves expressed in their letter give us an

insight into their predicament. They fear that the Latin Rite clergy and laity will count against them the organized presence of Oriental Catholics in their midst ("there will be a chain reaction"); they also fear that this will "diminish the chances" (of placement, promotion etc.) of priests who were originally Oriental. We catch here faint echoes of the fear which many Indians had when the British were rulers in India. Many Christians in India were then more pro-British than the British themselves and had become apologists of the British rule. We want to assure the 44 priests that even if they are discarded by the Latins, their own mother church will never disown them.

2) The other assumptions on which the priests' letter is posited (faith is above Rite; Two Rites cannot co-exist in the same place) are insulting to the Orientals. It is absurd to contrast Faith and Rite and it is less than Christian to pretend that more than one Catholic Rite in one place would inevitably lead to conflict. No Catholic should forget that we are now in the post-Conciliar era. Pope Paul VI promulgated on Nov. 21, 1964 the Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches of the II Vatican Council. The Eastern Churches are declared equal in everything to the numerically superior Latin Rite and entitled to propagate the faith and also charged to rule themselves, each in accordance with its own discipline (Art 5). Genuine Eastern traditions are to be preserved and restored, if abandoned (Art. 7).

3) All Rites are equal, but they are not the same. Each has its distinctive way of worship and life. The argument of certain Latin spokesmen that Rite differences do not matter, is only a cover-up for Latin domination. If Rite differences do not really matter, will they agree to give up the

7. *Further Documentation...* p. 20-21.

Latin Rite and accept the Oriental Rite which is closer to the soul of India? "Faith is above Rite", they will say and add, "therefore, let Orientals follow the Latin Rite!"

4) No Oriental should ever denigrate the great Latin church and its traditions, nor deny the Latins in Oriental territories the right to organize their church life according to their Rite. It will be equally absurd if the Latins deny the Orientals, under one pretext or the other, the right to be fully themselves. If I don't know the Latin Rite sufficiently well, I may be allowed to perish in my ignorance, but I have no business to pretend, "What I don't know is not knowledge". We have only one request to the 44 Fathers of Madras: if they are convinced that the Latin Rite is the right thing for them, let them remain where they are. Ignorance may be bliss, but, please do not so lightly sit in judgment over your Oriental brethren who hold dear a perspective different from yours, a perspective of which you are apparently ignorant.

5) Is the Archdiocese of Madras so fragile as to "disintegrate" when the Orientals, now forced to be members of Latin parishes, withdraw themselves? This is an entirely baseless and unchristian anxiety, born of the absence of faith. What might well happen is that when Catholic Oriental parishes are separately organized in Madras, they will be supportive of their Catholic brethren of the Latin Rite. If there is a Catholic Oriental Bishop in Madras, he will surely work in brotherly closeness with the Latin Archbishop of Madras and the Catholic church and the Christian community in a whole will then be stronger and more united than at present.

We should be thankful to the Madras letter writers (laymen and priests) because what they have said

might open the eyes of many in India and in Rome who had been deluded by Latin assurances in the past.

III

The Monsignor from Bangalore

A letter from the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Bangalore is another tell-tale document, used as exhibit by the Latin Bishops. The main points in his letter are:

1. The Syro Malabar Catholics are building halls intended for worship in certain areas of Bangalore, without Latin approval.
2. Religious Orders of Sisters from Kerala are also setting up "Study Houses" in Bangalore without Latin permission.
3. In certain parts of Bangalore "Syrian rite priests are trying to wean away the Syrian Catholics from the Latin rite community."
4. The measures "intended to protect and further the interests of the Syrian Catholics are bound to boomerang and jeopardise their social and economic welfare."
5. "It must be said to the credit of the Kerala Catholics that they have hitherto been living in harmony and cordial relationship with the local Catholic community in a spirit of fellowship and brotherhood."
6. "The new trends will drive a wedge in the Catholic community; the Church will become a laughing stock."

With due respect to the Administrator, I submit that the ugly developments in the Archdiocese of Bangalore culminating in the self-exile of the Archbishop, widely reported in the national press, has already made the church a laughing stock. This was entirely the result of internal strife within the Latin Rite and the poor

Syrian Christians have made no contribution to it at all.

If the Syrian Christians are now living in peace and harmony with everyone else in Bangalore today, why should the Monsignor fear that they will be the cause of strife if they are able to organize their own parishes? (The Tamils and Kannadigas of Bangalore fight not because their Rites differ.) The Dharmaram theological college, the Christ Arts/Science College and the Dharmaram parish have been flourishing in Bangalore for many years now without causing any strife in that city. Come, Monsignor, why are you so keen to keep the Syrians under Latin tutelage? Surely, the vague imaginary fear of strife does not exhaust the truth. As a good Catholic, you should feel happy when the Syrian diaspora in Bangalore are strong enough to stand on their own feet. You owe them your support, for they have done so much in past to build up your parishes and institutions. We do not seek compensation for their past labours; we only wish to exercise the liberty proper to the children of God in the universal Church. When you complain that Syrian Rite priests "wean away the Syrian Christians from Latin rite community", you only disclose your desire to keep them as Latins for ever. Monsignor, your slip is showing!

One recurring theme that runs through all these letters (as well as the statements of several Latin Bishops) is that of the carrot and the stick. "If the Syrians continue in Latin parishes and under Latin tutelage, they will continue to enjoy various benefits, or else it will be held and high-water for them". This policy certainly does not redound to the credit of the Latins: These threats in any case, touch only the fringe of reality. We must travel from the periphery of reality and of truth to their core.

George Nedungatt S.J. in his paper "Autonomy, Autocephaly and the problem of Jurisdiction Today", states unequivocally that "surely the orientals have the right to continue as Orientals in the diaspora and to grow into ecclesial fullness."⁸ Nedungatt quotes in the same paper Pope Paul VI's words in respect to emigrants in general and to Eastern Christians in particular; "Mobility pushes (forces) ultraterritorial concessions before institutions – they are called to extend themselves to where many of their faithful go and live." The Christian and ecclesial compulsions make it obligatory for all churches to follow unhindered their own faithful everywhere in the world. The mother churches are bound to take the necessary initiative to provide for the religious needs of their faithful and the spiritual children have a natural need to be under the pastoral care not only of the priests of their own church but also of their own Bishops. If, before the law of the Church, all particular churches (Latin and Oriental) are equal, as the decree on Eastern churches declares, it follows that they should have equal rights to develop where they are. This sacred right cannot be annulled by mere geographical considerations. If canon laws are rigid in this regard, they have to be revised.

IV

The authentic voice

The substantive part of the "Further Documentation" is a letter signed by all the Latin Bishops in India in which two things are clearly stated. (1) "multiple jurisdiction should not be extended beyond the present areas in and around Kerala." (2) "If it is not obligatory to have a Latin Bishops Conference, and an inter-Ritual Conference is adequate, we do not want a Latin Bishops Conference in India."

8. Quoted in Victor J Pospishil, *Ex Occidente Lex* (Carteret, NJ.: 1979), p. 136

I shall comment on the second point first. The offer of the Latin Bishops to give up a separate Latin Bishops Conference would appear a generous one if you do not examine it too closely. If their intention is to perpetuate the present set up, in which the big Latin majority has its sway in all things, that will be unacceptable to the Oriental churches. No way. The Orientals would be happy to continue their association in the C. B. C. I. provided the structures of the C. B. C. I. and its code of conduct for business reflect the Indian Reality of three individual churches. The Orientals do not wish to be relegated to the role of permanent and ineffective minorities within the C.B.C.I. without proper guarantees regarding their rights, particularly because they have learnt through experience that "the majority" can be unashamed grabbers of offices of authority and be insensitive to Oriental perspectives.

Multiple Jurisdiction

1) With an impressive adherence to firmness in the wrong the Latin Bishops say, "We do not want multiple jurisdiction in India", where they are now in possession of 99% of the territory. It seems to me that the Latin intransigence in this matter (apart from sheer reluctance to part with what they are in possession of) stems partly from their basically different perspective regarding the nature of the Church and the office of the Bishop. As Archimandrite Victor Pospishil puts it, "The Western (Latin) church looks at the Church as one, single, institution and regards particular churches only as conceptual parts of the whole. The Oriental Christians,

on the other hand, while knowing on the theological level the one Church founded by Christ, understands, on the level of ecclesial structures, the local church as the focal point and the universal Church as the result of the union of particular churches."⁹ Each church has its identity and self image. That is why there are "Eastern churches" but no "Eastern Church". The unity of the churches is found in the unity of faith sacraments and in the bond of affiliation to the successor of St. Peter.

Again, for the Orientals, the Bishop is not the lord of the man or the proprietor of the pasture-land. He is the shepherd of the sheep and the shepherd follows his sheep. "Where the Bishop is there the church is." There cannot be a valid and meaningful existence of a parish unrelated to the Bishop whose flock they are. A Bishop is not simply an administrative official, but the religious father figure, the image of Christ for that particular church.¹⁰

2) "The ecclesiastical jurisdiction being functionally for the service of the Church, touches per se and mainly persons and not territory. In other words Christ calls his disciples for the pastoral care of his sheep and not exactly for the administration of the pasturing fields."¹¹ The mobility of people in our times (far more extensive and pervasive than at the time of the Crusades which had compelled rethinking of single territorial jurisdiction) has to have a powerful impact on the theology of the particular church. This fact demands such an ecclesiastical postulate for which the traditional Latin theology may not be adequate any more.

9. *Ibid.*

10. cf. X Koodapuzha, "The Ecclesiology of the Thomas Christians of India", in Thomas Vellilamthadam and others (ed), *Ecclesial Identity of the Thomas Christians* (Kottayam: 1985), p. 85.

11. G. Nedungatt, La giurisdizione delle chiese", *Unitas* 31 (1976).

3) The Principle of single territorial jurisdiction had been abandoned by the Catholic church a long time ago in the Near East and it has been discontinued in the New World. We find today a multiplicity of co-territorial jurisdictions in many parts of the world. The city of Beirut has in residence Bishops of six different Rites. Jerusalem has multiple jurisdiction. In the United States the jurisdictions of the Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Maronite Chaldean and Melkite Catholic churches co-exist with the Latin. The principle of single jurisdiction has never stood in the way of Latin expansion in the homelands of various Eastern Catholic churches, usually at the expense of the Eastern Catholics. India has been no exception to this.

4) The Vatican II decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office (Art. 23, 3) has this provision:

".....where there are faithful of a different rite, the diocesan Bishop should provide for their spiritual needs either through priests or parishes of that rite or through an episcopal vicar endowed with the necessary faculties. Wherever it is fitting, the latter should also have episcopal rank. Or the Ordinary himself may perform the office of an Ordinary of different rites. If for certain reasons, these arrangements are not feasible in the eyes of the Apostolic see, then a proper hierarchy for the different rites is to be established."

The norm of Art. 23, 3 ought to be seen as an obligation imposed upon the local bishop and not as a norm enacted in order to limit the expansion of Catholic Oriental churches. It can

be clearly seen that this article of Vatican II does *not* uphold single jurisdiction as a Catholic principle. The higher axiom assumed by the article is that a Catholic should preserve a personal legal bond with the Church (Rite) of his origin, irrespective of where he chooses to settle.

5) "The stability of Rite nurtured and conserved historically in the cultures of different lands, and hence at one time circumscribed territorially, is now strictly personal. What were formerly regional peculiarities in liturgy and discipline, local customs sustained by ancient traditions springing from generations of Christian inhabitants, bear today in the present law the characteristics of particular personal law directly related to the person without mediation of territory. The territorial division of local hierarchies no longer fits the natural communal division of the faithful. The answer lies in the right of the faithful to preserve their own rite and to seek the services of their own priests. Furthermore, the church itself has a right, indeed a duty before God, to preserve the precious spiritual patrimony of the rites, which in the present circumstances simply cannot be adequately achieved by limiting this preservation to the ancient Oriental territories."¹²

Even if the Oriental Churches' jurisdiction is to be limited to the lands of their origin, for the St. Thomas Christians this will mean the whole of India.

(6) Add to the above, the directives of Pope Paul VI to the S. C. for the Oriental Churches that they should "..... in the very Latin terri-

12. W. W. Basset, "The Determination of Rite", *Analecta Gregoriana* 157 (1967).

tories, with assiduous care, also through a Visitor look after the not – yet organised nuclei of the faithful of Oriental Rites and also, as far as possible, take care of their spiritual needs by the creation of a hierarchy, if the number of the faithful and the circumstances require it.”¹³

V

Conclusion

Nowhere else on earth is the protest against ‘multiple jurisdiction’ so stridently made as in India. While the Latin Bishops take umbrage at certain articles appearing in *Christian Orient*, they have failed to answer the important arguments raised therein in support of the fundamental rights of the Oriental Churches in India.

Nowhere else on earth is multiple jurisdiction more vitally necessary than in India.

India is today a testing ground of the genuine intentions of Rome regarding the Oriental Catholic churches.¹⁴ India can boast of being the

home of, perhaps, the only Oriental Catholic church that continues to thrive in the land of its origin. India was the home from the first century A. D. of a Christian church with Apostolic foundation. This church had enjoyed all-India jurisdiction. And yet this church was compulsorily Latinised, with political connivance, and confined to a corner of the Indian sub-continent. They were barred from evangelistic work outside the narrow strip of Kerala, which is only 1% of the land mass of India. They were also barred from ministering to their own people outside Kerala.

99% of the Indian territory was claimed exclusively for the Latins out of bounds for the St. Thomas Christians while Kerala was retained for multi-Jurisdiction. At the same time the Latin church built itself up all over India relying, to a large extent, on personnel drawn from among the ancient St. Thomas Christians. Even today about 75% of the Priests, Religious and other personnel of the Latin church in India are those who

13. *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae* of August 14, 1967, no. 44.

14. Cf. Thomas Vellilamthadam, *Countdown to 1999. 400 Years of Agony and Action since 1599* (Kottayam: 1985); C. A. Abraham, *The Indian Reality – A Church at Risk* (Trivandrum: 1984); C. A. Abraham, *A Matter of Rite* (Kottayam: 1969); N. A. Thomas, *One Territory– One Bishop? Or Shall the Syrian Rites die?* (Changanacherry: 1971); V. F. Vineeth, *Justice and Reconciliation. The Sad but Living Story of a Church in Fellers* (Bangalore: 1983); X. Koodapuzha, “Inter-Ecclesial Relations’ *Christian Orient* 4, 1 (1983), p. 5ff; G. Chediath and T. Velliamthadam, “One Territory, One Bishop, One Jurisdiction – Solution to the Problem?”, *Ibid.* p. 12ff; J. Koipuram, “Pastoral Care of the Syro-Malabar Catholics outside Kerala”, *Ibid.* p. 40ff; G. Chediath and T. Vellilamthadam, “A Time to Act”, *Ibid.* p. 100ff; Mar J. Powathil, “Some Pastoral Problems and Inter Church Relationship in India”, *Ibid.* 3, 1–2 (1982), p. 5ff; Cyril Mar Baselios, “Evangelisation and Pastoral Care: Concern of Malankara Church”, *Ibid.* p. 25ff; X. Koodapuzha and M. Vellanickal, “Theological Evaluation of Certain Points”, *Ibid.* p. 60ff; J. Vachaparampil and V. Pathikulangara, “Reflections on Latin Oriental Relations in India”, *Ibid.*, p. 133ff; G. Chediath, “Unity versus Uniformity: An Ecumenical Question”, *Ibid.*, 2 (1981), p. 141ff; G. Chediath, Problems and Prospects of Evangelization in India – an Ecumenical Question, *Jeevadhara*, 13/76 (1983), 253ff. X. Koodapuzha, “The Inter-Ecclesial Relations in the Indian Context”, *Ibid.* 229ff.

were originally Oriental. Today there are large congregations of Catholic Orientals in all the Indian cities. These Orientals all over India have all along been accepted as truly Indian in culture and in aspirations. Their church had an origin unlinked to colonialism. They can effectively project the Indian image of the Catholic church. The Orientals in India today are a resurgent church, with vast potential. Historically speaking, India is Oriental territory.

This ancient Oriental church in India continues to be subjected to indignities even today as though the great historical injustices of the past have not been enough. They are denied even the very rights and privileges extended to them by Vatican II. (Surely, the Ecumenical Council's *decrees* are not less important than the *decisions* of the C. B. C. I.) They are

denied the fundamental rights enjoyed by their non-Catholic counterparts. How wonderful it would be if the Latin hierarchy in India accepted the Catholic Orientals as equal to them and petitioned Rome in behalf of the Orientals! That would indeed usher in a new age in the history of the Catholic Church in India. How I wish I could sing my *Nunc Dimittis* after that!

The Orientals in India today, more than ever, have a heightened self-awareness of their dignity, obligations and rights. They are also aware of the greater degree of understanding and appreciation that Rome has been showing towards them in recent years. The prospects, therefore, certainly are not bleak, Latin obstructions notwithstanding. The future is not what it used to be.

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The Ruhanutha¹ of the Chaldeo-Indian Church²

(Syro-Malabar Church)

I

Introduction

Ruhanutha is a *mesihite*³ experience in *Ruha d'Qudsa*⁴. Mesihite experience in *Ruha d'Qudsa* is God-experience, as the Mesihites believe. This Mesihite-experience in *Ruha d'Qudsa* in the Chaldeo-Indian milieu is the *Rūhānūthā* of the Chaldeo-Indian Church, which is an individual Church according to the definitions of Vatican II⁵.

Ruhanutha is one of the four constituent elements of an individual Church⁶. The other three elements are liturgy, theology and ecclesiastical

discipline. Ruhanutha has its fundamental basis in the ecclesiological nature. The Fathers in Vatican II, being conscious of this fact, acknowledge the spiritual heritages of the Eastern Churches, among which we find the Chaldeo-Indian Church⁷.

Vatican II paves the way: "History tradition and numerous ecclesiastical institutions manifest luminously how much the universal Church is indebted to the Eastern Churches."⁸ Each of the individual Churches in the Universal Church has however her own theological view point, manifested at least by a living tradition. This tradition safeguards the ecclesial

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1. ܪܗܢܘܬܗ (ruhanutha) is a Syriac Word, meaning spirituality.
 2. Chaldeo-Indian Church is a Church of Apostolic origin from the beginning of the Apostolic era. St. Thomas the Apostle is the founder of this Church. Chaldeo signifies the Syriac language. We prefer Etta to Church.
 3. Mesihite is an English term derived from the Syriac name Mesiha, means the anointed one, and mesihite means christian.
 4. Syriac term for the Holy Spirit, is ܪܗܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ *Ruha d'qudsa*. Literally, it means Spirit of Holiness.
 5. Vat. II, OE 2.
 6. Vat. II, OE 3.
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. Vat. II, OE 5; For further details see Leo XIII, Apostolic Letter "Orientalium Dignitas" Nov. 30, 1894; "Praeclara Gratulationis" June 20, 1894: The chief rules given by Leo XIII are the following: The Latin missionary inducing an Oriental to embrace the Latin rite would incur suspension. Religious communities in charge of oriental colleges would see to it that the Oriental students received instructions in keeping with their

and spiritual heritage of each individual Church, provided the community is enriched by a living tradition. The Fathers in Vatican II, therefore, not only honour the ecclesiastical and spiritual heritage with merited esteem and rightful praises, but also unhesitatingly look upon it as the heritage of the Universal Church.

The teaching of Vatican II insists on the duty of the Easterners to preserve the lawful traditions: "All Eastern rite members should know and be convinced that they can and should always preserve their lawful liturgical rites and their established way of life, and that these should not be altered except by way of an appropriate and organic development"⁹.

The established way of life according to the Syrian community¹⁰ of Mar Thoma Sliha in India could be described as ܠܚܢܘܬܐ (Ruhanutha)

of this individual Church. The identity of each individual Church depends on its "proper and individual procedure", as Vatican II puts forward. The unique position of the Chaldeo-Indian Church in the Universal Church is very well recognized by the Holy

See¹¹. Now we have to investigate the unique position of the Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Church.

The Ruhanutha of an individual Church is properly expressed only in the background of the ecclesiology of that Church. One of the most important elements of the ecclesiological exposition of its Ruhanutha is the appropriate terminology of the tradition of that Church. In the case of the Chaldeo-Indian Church, she has her origin in Judeo-Asian traditions.¹²

The origin of the Chaldeo-Indian Church has direct contact with the Apostolic Church apart from the Greco-Roman Churches.¹³ The particular tradition of the Chaldeo-Indian Church is called Syrian. Since it is an autonomous tradition, which has its origion and development fully in the Syriac milieu, its theology is to be expressed in Syriac terminologies.

Syriac being a dialect of Aramaic¹⁴ had long been a *lingua franca* over much wider area. There are Aramaics all over Asian countries. Chaldeo-Indian Church is one of the Asian Churches.

Modern writers as well as readers are familiar with terminologies of

rite. No college or religious institute of Latin rite thereafter be opened without the consent of the Holy See in places where the non-Latin rite people predominated. Every Oriental, even outside his patriarchal territory would remain inscribed in his own rite (Cf Furey, Francis T., *Life of Leo XIII and the History of His Pontificate*. Philadelphia, 1903, p. 457.

9. Vat. II, OE 6.

10. Syrian community is generally called as St. Thomas Christians. For detailed study see, Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians*, London, 1970, pp. 15ff; Placid J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, Alleppey, 1976, pp. 15ff.

11. Vat. II OE 6.

12. V. Pathiculangara, *Resurrection, Life and Renewal*, Bangalore, 1982, pp. 10ff.

13. *Idem*, p. 11.

14. Cf Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians and Their Syriac Treasures*, Alleppey, 1974, pp. 18ff.

Greek, Roman and English literature, when the treatises on spiritualities and other theological subjects are concerned. As an introductory attempt to present the Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Church, we give the following terminological observation:

1. **ܐܪܘܙܘܬܐ** (Karozutha), means proclamation. It is used in the sense of the message of the Gospel also. We make use of this term in this article for the proclamatory sense of the Gospel message, as witnessing the faith in words and actions (liturgy).

2. **ܡܣܠܚܢܘܬܐ** (Mesalhanutha) or **ܡܠܚܢܘܬܐ** (Malahanutha) is the derived passive form of the noun **ܐܠܗܐ** (Alaha) which means God. **ܐܠܗܐ** (Allah) means to divinize, from which comes the word **ܡܣܠܚܢܘܬܐ** (Mesalhanutha) or **ܡܠܚܢܘܬܐ** (Malahanutha) which means divinization.

3. **ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ** (Mar Walah). These words mean 'My Lord and My God'. These two words are given in the confession of faith by Mar Thoma Sliha, when Iso Mesiha appeared to the disciples. Both of these words are nouns attributed to the person of Iso Mesiha.

4. **ܡܣܝܗܘܬܐ** (Mesihutha). The word **ܡܣܝܗܐ** (Mesiha) means anointed one. The Greek word is *Christos* whence comes Christ. The Peshitha always makes use of Mesiha. The followers of Mesiha were called the brethren, or the saints, or the disci-

ples or the believers. The word *Christian* was first made use of to designate the followers of Mesiha first in Antioch (Acts 11: 26). *Christianos* is a Greek form of a Latin word, formed from *Christus* and the ending *-anus*. According to the terminology, the followers of Mesiha would be called *mesihaye*. Hence in English *Mesihites*. The religion of the Mesihites is to be called **ܡܣܝܗܘܬܐ** (Mesihutha). Hence in English Mesihaship or Mesianity?).

5. **ܐܕܬܐ** (Edta) a term developed among the Syrian Churches in West Asia to designate the Syrian Church distinct from Jewish Synagogue. In the fourth century Mar Aphraates and Mar Aprem frequently used the term **ܐܕܬܐ** in preference to **ܡܫܝܚܐ** (Knusta-Synagogue). Pesitta tradition also preferred Edta to Knusta.

6. **ܪܘܚܢܘܬܐ** (Ruhanutha) (**ܪܘܚܢܘܬܐ** - Ruhaniutha). The word **ܪܘܚܐ** (ruha) has the meaning of wind, air in motion, spirit etc. The dynamic nature of **ܪܘܚܐ** (ruha) brings notion of spirit and its derivative form **ܪܘܚܢܘܬܐ** (Ruhanutha) means spirituality. Spirit of Holiness — **ܪܘܚܐ ܕ'ܩܘܨܬܐ**, is the Third person of the Trinity.

7. **ܫܠܝܚܐ** (Seliha): The noun **ܫܠܝܚܐ** (Seliha) is derived from the root **ܫܠܚܐ** (slah) which means to send. In the Synagogue according to the Rabbinic custom Seliha might be the

15. It is through the spoken language of Syriac that Iso Mesiha, the Son of God made his revelation to the world. Hence we follow the Syriac terminology in our article.

leader of the Congregation in prayer. The Syriac term ܐܠܗܐ (Seliha) designates the successor of the one who was sent by God, namely Mesiha. The adverbial form of ܐܠܗܐ (Seliha) is ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (Selihaya). Hence in English Selihite. The adjective form is the same as ܐܠܗܐܝܐ Selihaya, which means apostolic. The Edta originated from Mesiha is qualified as Selihaita. Hence the expression ܐܠܗܐܝܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (Edta Selihaita. The ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (edta) of India is called ܐܠܗܐܝܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (Etta Selihaita d'Mar Thoma.

8. ܐܠܡܕܐܝܐ (Talmidha). This term means disciple. The ܐܠܡܕܐܝܐ (Talmidhe) of Iso Mesiha were the pillars of the Meshite community, which was called ܐܠܗܐܝܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (Kensa Selihaitta), namely Apostolic community or rather Apostolic Church. Among the Syrians the community of the believers were called ܐܡܡܐ (Amma) in singular. The characteristic name of the follower of Mar Thoma Seliha in India is ܐܠܡܕܐܝܐ (Nazraya). Hence in Malayalam നാസ്രായ (Nazrāny).

II

Edta Selihaita-Selihite Church

Before going into details of the very nature of the Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta, we would like

to present the origin of the ܐܠܗܐܝܐ (Edta) from the biblical point of view.

The word Christian has its origin from the Greek speaking community of Antioch.¹⁶ We would prefer Mesihite community to Christian community, precisely because of its original character. The Greek word Christos and the English name Christ take their original name Mesiha.¹⁷ The original name proper to the Son of man is Iso Mesiha. Those who are of Mesiha may be called Mesihites. Thus the disciples of Mesiha as a community is formed as Mesihite community. The members of this community were qualified as believers or the faithful.¹⁸

All the communities formed after the model of Selihite community should have been called the Mesihite community, because they were the followers of Mesiha. And so the community formed in India after the model and spirit of Mesihite community in Jerusalem as the result of Selihite Karozutha of Mar Thoma Seliha is called Nazrāny community about which we would discuss later.

Karozutha of the Edta Selihaita

Karozutha of the Edta Selihaita is well rooted in the very life of Iso Mesiha. This Mesihite event is intended to divinize the chosen people and the rest of mankind. The aim of the Selihite preaching was to extend the mesihite community to the entire nations. The karozutha of the Edta Selihaita has two phases which consists in conversion first and then in growth. It had its commission from Mesiha Himself, with whom each of the Seliha had personal experience. The sum total and substance of this experience is the acknowledgement of Iso Mesiha

16. Acts 11:26

17. Jerome Biblical Commentary, sv Messiah.

18. Acts 2:44

as ܡܪܝܡ (Maria) and ܐܠܗܐ (Alaha). Each one of the Seliha is asked to witness to the faith in the glorified Iso Mesiha. In this sense the karozutha – the message of the preaching of Mar Thoma Seliha is the fulness of the Meshiaship of Iso, namely His Lordship and Divinity. In other words, we could find the content of the karozutha of the Edta Selihaita in the confession of Mar Thoma.

Karozutha of Mar Thoma Seliha

Mar Thoma Seliha was the representative of the Edta Selihaita to confess the faith in Iso Mesiha as Lord and God. Mar Thoma Seliha had to bring forward the figure of the Son of man (ܐܢܫܐ ܒܢ ܐܢܫܐ) as ܐܠܗܐ (Lord)

and ܐܠܗܐ (God). So he says unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my figure into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.¹⁹ Mar Thoma Seliha had to believe not God the Father in heaven but the Son of God on earth, who is Lord and God. Up to now the object of such a faith was God the Father alone. But after the glorification of the son of man Iso Mesiha became the object of faith as that of the Father. The very qualification of the Father in heaven as Lord and God is now applicable to the son of man also. Mar Thoma Seliha formulated his faith in Iso Mesiha in the following

words: ܡܪܝܡ (Mar) ܡܬܠܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ (Walah) My Lord and My God.²⁰ The confession of faith of Mar Thoma Seliha was in anticipation of the belief of the Selihite College as well as the early Meshihte Community. The combination *Lord and God*²¹ is found in the *LXX* and it is translated as the name of God of Israel (Yahweh, Elohim).²² In short the karozutha of Mar Thoma Seliha is the belief in the son of man. This belief as faith in Iso Mesiha is the source of the ܐܠܗܐ ܡܬܠܝܢ (Seliha-utha – apostolate) of Mar Thoma Seliha, namely his act of worship and consequent ruhanutha.²³

Ruhanutha of Mar Thoma Seliha –

ܡܪܝܡ (Mar) ܡܬܠܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ (Walah)

India is proud of its selihite origin ecclesiastically and the Edta in India has her ruhanutha from Mar Thoma Seliha, and this ruhanutha of Mar Thoma Seliha could be called the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta, whose seliha is Mar Thoma. We qualify the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta in the Maudianuta (creed) of Mar Thoma Seliha: ܡܬܠܝܢ ܡܪܝܡ (Mar Walah), My Lord and My God.

Biblical Foundation of the Faith Experience of Mar Thoma

Those who are faithful to the inspiration of the Word of God would argue that the maudianuta of Mar

19. Jn. 20:25, 29.

20. Jn. 20:29.

21. Kyrieh, Theos- ܡܬܠܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ Lord, God.

22. Jerome Biblical Commentary; St. John, 20: 20-28.

23. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.* pp. 7ff.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Jn. 11:16

Thoma Seliha was not a disbelief in Iso, but a confession of the divinity of the Lord. A man with complete human nature except sin is confessed as Lord and God equal to God the Father except Fatherhood. This is the biblical foundation of the faith-experience of Mar Thoma Seliha—a faith which was active even before his selihaic confession. Even when the disciples had to risk their life, Mar Thoma proclaimed: Let us go too, and die with Him.²⁵ Such a readiness to risk one's life for God's sake, shows the nature of that person's ruhanutha.

The faith-experience of Mar Thoma was not theoretical but rather practical. That is why Mar Thoma Seliha insisted on the human experience of Iso with His wounds. The real faith is identified with human experience of Iso and it is a commitment to the blessings that we hope for or the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen.²⁶ In short, faith is the anticipated and assured possession of faith of the heavenly realities.

Mar Thoma Seliha is a unique figure of the genuine faith in the person of Iso Mesiha.²⁷ It is this kind of faith that helps one to lead a life in Iso in Ruha d'Qudsa and such a life is identified in Mar Thoma Seliha as a ruhanutha entirely genuine and identified with the life style of Mar Thoma.

Faith-Experience of Mar Thoma Expressed in the Liturgical Life of the Chaldeo-Indian Church

“Do this as ܩܘܪܒܢܐ (dukрана)²⁸ of me.” When Iso instituted the

ܩܘܪܒܢܐ (Qurbana), Mar Thoma Seliha was present with all other selihe in the cenacle. Mar Thoma Seliha was also asked to do the same celebration as a ܩܘܪܒܢܐ (dukрана) of Iso. There are possibilities of Mar Thoma Seliha reaching India from Jerusalem and continuing the same Semitic way of celebrating Qurbana in India as he used to celebrate in Jerusalem.

Analysing the available very ancient text of Qurbana of the Selihe²⁹ we could see in it the Semitic and Jerusalemian Characteristics. The form of the liturgy Mar Thoma Seliha used in India might have the nature of the Birkat-Ha-Mazon of the Jewish meal, since he came from the Jewish community³⁰. The Qudasa of Addai and Mari is formed after the model of Birkat-Ha-Mazon. There are similarities between the Qudasa of Addai and Mari with *Didache*, (doctrine of the Selihe) written in the first century. The conclusion we would draw from the above observations is the possibility of a realized experience of Mar Thoma Seliha in India according to the selihite liturgical tradition, which was Semitic in nature and biblical in content.

The expression of faith is the foundation of the liturgy. In other words, the faith-experience of Mar Thoma Seliha continued through the liturgical tradition he started in India. Such a conclusion is possible from the fact that at present we see a rich Christian community apostolically originated in India, and that has its origin from Mar Thoma himself³¹. The existence of an active faith in the community

26. Jn. 20:25

27. IIb. 11:

28. Lk. 22:19, Duhrana (ܩܘܪܒܢܐ) means remembrance, commemoration.

29. T. Mannoranparambil, *Christian Orient*, 1981, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 66ff.

30. Bernard of St Thomas, *St. Thomas Christians*, Palai, 1916, pp. 65ff.

31. Placid J. Podipara, *Our Rite, Mannanam*, 1951, p. 15.

presupposes the liturgical life of the community because the life is based on liturgy. The liturgical life has its basis, the faith of Mar Thoma Seliha, expressed in the words ܡܪ ܬܘܡܐ ܨܠܝܗܐ (Mar Walah). Hence the ruhanutha of the followers of Mar Thoma Seliha in India is to be found in the liturgical tradition of India.

Ruhanutha-Realized Mesalhanutha

When the liturgy of an individual Edta is formed out of the Word of God and sound tradition of that community it can be qualified according to the axiom: *Lex orandi Lex credendi*³². The Word of God proclaimed and celebrated in any apostolic community shows the faith element of that community.

To have an authentic life we need a worship in Spirit and truth and that should come out of faith-experience. In this context authentic life-or real ruhanutha should be the outcome of the liturgy of the universal Edta comes in and form the individual Edtas³³.

Each individual Edta has her own liturgy. Hence particular ruhanutha. Now we have to analyse the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta. Liturgical celebrations being the source of ruhanutha we would like to concentrate on the Liturgical traditions of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta. Liturgy of the Etta comes under the elements of the following items: Qurbana, Sacraments, Liturgy of the Hours and Liturgical year. These are the foundations for the ruhanutha of any Etta³⁴.

To arrive at the notion of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta, it is enough to explain the nature of the sacraments and Liturgy of the Hours and Sacramentals as they are lived in the community.

Baptism and Chrismation together prepared the assembly for the fruitful participation in the Qurbana³⁵. Nazranies used to receive the Qurbana in two species. Both priests and other Nazranies have to pay great attention for the celebration and reception of the Holy Qurbana, that they may not have any disrespect either from within or from without.

The pneumatological nature of the Holy Qurbana according to the three Qudasas of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta shows an Eucharistic theology of forgiveness of sins³⁶. The result of such integrations of the sacramental celebration is the eternal life to the souls³⁷. What we would like to stress here is the active participation of the assembly in the Holy Qurbana, namely the spirit oriented or rather pneumatological participation in the Holy Mystery. That is why the forgiveness of sins and eternal life are interconnected in the celebration of Qurbana in the Chaldean tradition.

Apart from the Holy Qurbana, penitents were punished according to the local system ecclesiastically organized³⁸. Penitents have rich resources for the forgiveness of sins in the Qurbana itself: "In your mercy, O Lord, forgive the sins and the offenses of your servants, and sanctify our lips by your grace, that we may bring forth

32. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.* p. 1.

33. Vat. II. LG 23.

34. Vat. II, SC 13.

35. Josef A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*, London, 1980, pp. 84ff.

36. Taksa d'Qudasa of the Syro-Malabar Church.

37. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.* p. 110.

38. Paulinus, OCD, *Viaggio all' India Orientale*, Roma, 1672, p. 145.

fruits of glory to your exalted divinity with all saints in your Kingdom"³⁹.

The above mentioned sacraments, sometimes administered together with other sacraments, were interconnected with each other and helped much to the growth of the ruhanutha of the Nazrany community. The integrated nature of the sacramental administration with the sacramentals show the fundamental truth that the obedience of faith expressed in the liturgy, is the primary condition or basis of a mesihite ruhanutha. Such a ruhanutha is the purpose of the liturgy, which aims at the glory of God and mesalhanutha (divinization) of mankind. Chaldean liturgy brings this truth to our mind: "The divine Liturgy is celebrated for the glory of the adorable Trinity, to offer glory, honour, thanksgiving and worship, for the propitiation of debts and remission of sins, for the renewal and salvation of our nature, for the resurrection of our bodies and new life in the kingdom of héaven, for

the Church and for the people of God for the dead, for peace and tranquility for the material welfare of the whole world, that we may become perfect witness of God's glory, pure sanctuaries in His honour, holy temples fit for His habitation"⁴⁰.

Another important source of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta is the Liturgy of the Hours.⁴¹ The clergy and the religious recited the Chaldean Office daily both in the morning and evening.⁴² The arrangements of the liturgy of the week is so beautifully done that the spirit of the Sunday may be continued through out the week.⁴³ Sunday being the feast day of the resurrection of Iso Mesiha all other days are to be enriched with the liturgy of the Sunday. This beautiful liturgical rhythm shows the spirit of the East Syrian Etta in general and that of the Chaldean Etta in particular. The diagram given below shows the ruhanutha of the week.

SUNDAY

Onita d'Basalique

Monday: Res Qala d' Mawtba

Onita d'Lelya

Tuesday: Res Qala d' Mawtba

Wednesday: Dukrana d' Martha Mariam

Onita d' Sapra

Thursday: Res Qala d' Mawtba

Onita d' Raze

Saturday: Qala d' Sahra d' Mawtha

Friday: Hase d' Maran Iso

39. *Taksa d'Qudasa of the Syro-Malabar Church*, 1961.

40. J. Aaerthayil, *The Spiritual Heritage of the Thomas Christians*, Bangalore, 1982, p. 93.

41. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.* p. 14.

42. Thomas Puthiakunnel, *Syro-Malabar Clergy and Their General Obligation*, Ernakulam, 1964, p. 134.

43. J. Podipara, *Reflection on Liturgy*, Kottayam, p. 62.

Oitha d' Basalique (the principal hymn in the evening Liturgy) of Sunday Ramsa (evening prayer) is repeated in the res qala (high voice) of Mawtba (part of a service sitting) in the Lelya (night prayer) of Monday. Again we see the Onitha d' Lelya (qala d' Sahra- the Office of the night) of Sunday in the Res qala of Mawtba of Tuesday. Onitha d' Sapra (principle hymn in the morning prayer) is found again in the res qala of the Mawtba of Thursday. Onitha d' Raze (Anthem of the mysteries of Qurbana) of Sunday again in the qala d' Sahra of the Mawtba of Saturday. The Wednesday of the Week is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Friday to the passion of Iso Mesiha.

One who follows the spirit of the above mentioned liturgical celebrations of the Week, is able to lead an authentic mesihite life. In short, the ruhanutha or rather the realized mesalanutha, depends on one's faithfulness to the liturgical life based on the Liturgy of the Etta.

In conclusion we would like to give the observations of Dr. Pathikulangara: "Since the Church is said to transmit to every generation all that she is and that she believes through her doctrine, life and worship, the liturgical celebration of the Church must then be the expression of her faith.⁴⁴ The content of this truth is expressed in the famous axiom *Lex orandi lex credendi*. After the discussion on the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta we would like to complete the axiom in the following way: *Lex vivendi lex orandi; lex orandi lex credendi*.⁴⁵

III

Mesihite Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta

1. Mesihite Experience of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

Bede Griffiths, one of the pioneers of Indian Asram life, has once expressed his esteem for the Syrian Ettas by their traditions in the following ways: "In the first place, we adopted the Syrian rite instead of Latin as the majority of Christians in Kerala belonged to the Syrian Church. This immediately opened to us the world of eastern christianity, of which I had known little untill then. Most people think of christianity an essentially western religion, as it has largely become. But the Syrian church is then to remind us that before the Church spoke Greek or Latin, it spoke Aramaic, and while it was extending westward to Greece or Rome, it also extended eastward through Palestine and Syria to Mesopotamia. Both Greek and Latin Christians remain essentially western in their style and habit of thought, though Greek Christians certainly underwent a strong oriental influence. But the Syrian Church is essentially eastern."⁴⁶

The above given esteem for the Syrian Etta in India of a Western Scholar, although too much distracted today from his original inspiration of Indian Asram life, catch the attention of many to know how the loyalty of the Syrian Etta remained till now to the rich eastern ruhanutha. It is difficult to see an Etta like the Chaldeo-Indian one in the history which was

44. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.* p. 1.

45. M. O. Gordillo, *Theologia Orientalium cum Latinorum Comparata*, (OCA 158). Roma, 1960, p. 3.

46. Bede Griffiths, *Christian Ashram*, London, 1966, pp. 22ff.

so strong that it could keep its oriental characteristics—semitic and selihite nature, for 16 centuries.⁴⁷ The secret behind such a loyalty to the ruhanutha is its mesihite experience against the cultural background of India and oriental liturgical richness. The mesihite community of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta has her liturgy of Eastern origin and Syrian tradition familiar to Indian culture, which the westerners hold in great respect.

An Etta endowed with selihite tradition and Gospel experience should be respected and encouraged in all its potencies as Vatican II insists: "This most holy Synod gladly reminds all of one highly significant fact among others; in the East there flourish many particular or local Churches; and of these many glory in taking their origins from the apostles themselves... It is equally worthy of note that from their very origins the Churches of the East have had a treasury from which the Church of the West has amply drawn for its liturgy, spiritual tradition and jurisprudence"⁴⁸. Our attempt to study the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta is in the line with the teaching of Vatican II as given above.

Even the Council teaches the origin of different (spiritualities) ruhanuthas based on natural gifts and conditions. Vatican II says: "However, the heritage handed down by the apostles was received in different forms and ways, so that from the very beginning of the Church it has had a varied development in various places, thanks to a similar variety of natural gifts and conditions of life".⁴⁹

From the very early days the Chaldeo-Indian Etta formed after the selihaic tradition, has an important role to play in safeguarding the selihite heritages in India. Unfortunately, the spiritual treasures of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta were neglected by the westerners as well as the orientals themselves.⁵⁰ The remedy for the problem mentioned above is the study of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

Mar Thoma Seliha brought the mesihite experience to India and handed it over to the Nazraney community then existing. Thus mesihite experience of Mar Thoma Seliha paved the way for the Chaldeo-Indian ruhanutha, which is the same as the selihaic ruhanutha essentially biblical in origin.

Nazraney Edta

The name Nazraney, however, turn our attention to its origin. The term Nazir was used to signify a person consecrated to God for a limited period of life. "A Nazir was any man or woman consecrated to God for a limited period of time. Nowhere else in the Pentateuch are the Nazrites even mentioned. During the period of consecration, the Nazir could take neither wine nor any other fermented drink; his hair could not be cut, and all contact with corpses was forbidden. The regulations in Nm codify a very ancient practice and adapt it to the Levitical ritual. Instead of a consecration for life, this set of rules reduced the commitment to a temporary vow. In the story of Samson (Jgs 13: 2-7) the consecration was for

47. Placid J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, pp. 48, 196.

48. Vat. II, UR 14.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Placid J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, pp. 194ff.

life. As late as the NT period we hear of Christians taking the Nazrite vow for a limited period of time (Acts 21: 23-26).⁵¹ According to the Jerome Biblical Commentary the OT and the NT are in a way familiar with the term Nazir.⁵²

The Syriac term **ܢܙܝܪ** (Nazir) has the following meaning: consecrated, set apart for the divine worship, abstained, retired, became monk, kept virginity. This term has the connotation of chaste life, and modesty, which was the qualification of the Nazir woman in Indian Etta.

The term Nazraney might have the origin from the word Nazir or Nzar. Even today the name Nazraney is not out of use. There were Nazranies in the fourth century in Syria.⁵³ Those who embraced the mēsihite faith from Mar Thoma Seliha were called Nazranies

The name Nazraney might have been given by the Jews to the Indian followers of Iso Mēsīha, who was called Nazarene. The Etta Nazraya in India was proud of being the disciples of Iso the Nazrite or rather of Nazareth.

Another element to justify the Nazraney phrase is in Syrian tradition. The ruhanutha of the mēsihite community might have had the covenant consciousness of the Syrian Ettas, called benai qeīama (sons of the covenant) and benat qeīama (daughters of the covenant) were named by the term Nazraney.⁵⁴

The mesihite community of the

Chaldeo-Indian Etta is nemed "Mapilas" or nobles.⁵⁵ As a title, this term was common to the Jews and Mohamedans. Thus, when the Jews were Juda Mapilas and the Mohamedans Jenakamapilas, mapila join to Nazraney was used exclusively of the ancient Mar Thoma Mesihites. Nazraney Mapilas were adhered to Mar Thoma Margam and they were identified with the Chaldeo-Indian Mesihites.

Mar Thoma Margam

The sum total of the selihite heritage of the Nazranies is called Thoma Margam.⁵⁶ Margam means way. It is called Thoma Margam because it was Mar Thoma who gave them a new way and a new vision of life based on the authentic liturgy of the Etta. The community formed out of the life-style according to the Chaldeo-Indian Etta, considers Thoma Margam as its fundamental rule of life or way of life.⁵⁷ Mar Thoma Margam consists in liturgical, ecclesiastical, ascetical and socio-cultural life-style of the Nazranies, Thoma Margam, by all means, is equal to the ruhanutha of the Nazranies, precisely because, the ruhanutha is the outcome of the liturgy of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta, which is the very expression of the mesihite experience of Mar Thoma Seliha.

IV

A Living Wittness of the Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

The ruhanutha of the Nazranies based on the Thoma Margam has a

51. Num. 6

52. Jerome Biblical Commentary, sv. *Nazirite*.

53. Jerome, *Adversus Pelagianos*, 111-112.

54. Cf. *Christian Orient*, 1980, vol. 1, No. 3, Sept. pp. 150ff.

55. P. J. Podipara, *Hierarchy*, p. 16.

56. V. Pathikulangara, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

57. *Ibid.*

traditional witnessing value in the religious mindedness of India. Out of such a religiosity, the Nazranies in India became the practising mesihites.

One of the main characteristics of the Nazranies in India is its pneumatic emphasis of the Gospel message. Now the religiosity of the Indians concretised in the Nazraney community became fully biblical, oriental and Indian by its very nature and tradition.

According to the pneumatic nature, each one endeavoured to ascend as high as he or she could on the ladder of mesihite ruhanutha; any defect was more an imperfection than sin. What a difference between the Nazranies and those of the West who tried to evade the law by all sorts of legalistic interpretations. The Latin idea of sin was unknown to the mesihite community in India and the Europeans could not understand them.⁵⁸ What differentiate between these two moralities of the Nazranies and that of the westerners are the pneumatic and institutionally legalistic approach.

The rigorous way out of pneumatic origin, in which the Nazranies observed many ascetical practices, made them esteemed by the non-mesihites, among whom asceticism is always tolerated.⁵⁹ The ruhanutha of the Nazranies includes the monastic system of the eastern world too.

Indigenous Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

The mesihite faith expressed in Chaldaic liturgy was adapted to the

Indian culture, and the new liturgy of the Nazranies has its physiognomy or individuality in the Indian context and culture. Thus the Chaldeo-Indian have a unique and individual way of worship, for which nobody can demand any authorship except Mar Thoma and his followers called pure Nazranies. It is in Mar Thoma Margam, as we discussed above, that we could see the indigenous characteristics of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indians.

The Thoma Margam has its compliment only with the contribution of the Indian culture. Thus the external architecture of the Ettas, instrumental musics, etta paraphernalia etc. were all indigenous. The socio-religious ceremonies of the local non-mesihites performed from birth to death, and after death are found among the Nazranies. The first mesihite community in India kept up as their own whatever they had and were not in any way harmful to their new commitment.

The pneumatic ruhanutha of the Nazranies together with the religious mindedness of the Indians will bring the indigenous style mesihite life among the Chaldeo-Indian Etta. This style of mesihite life, we would say, might be called ruhanutha or realized mesalhanutha (malahanutha) of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

In short, the basic Gospel idea of the kingdom of God is realized in the Chaldeo-Indian Etta, which is Indian in culture, Chaldaic in liturgical prayer style, and mesihite in God-experience.⁶⁰

58. P. J. Podipara, *Four Essays on the Pre-Seventeenth Century Church of the Thomas Christians of India*, Changanacherry, 1977, pp. 11ff.

59. Paulinus OCD, *Viaggio all' Indie Orientali* Roma, 11672, 11, c. v.

60. P. J. Podipara, "The Social and Ecclesial Customs of the Syrian Christians of India, in *Eastern Churches Quarterly*, London, 1944, p. 222.

Chaldeo-Indian Ruhanutha and Mesalhanutha in the Universal Edta

The theological reasons for the various forms of ruhanutha are given by St. Paul: "Each of you must judge himself soberly by the standard of faith God has given him... our gifts differ according to the grace given us".⁶¹ The same idea of different gifts is given in letter to the Ephesians: "Each one of us, however, has been given his own share of grace, given as Christ allotted it".⁶²

Mesihite ruhanutha is the participation in the mystery of Mesiha to the extent that we share through the ruha d' Qudsa. Mar Thoma Seliha who confessed his faith in the person of Iso Mesiha has the expression of it in the mesihite life shared in India by his followers. Thus we have a particular way of mesihite living in the Universal Edta. The individuality of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta is greatly a constituent element of the ruhanutha of the Universal Edta.⁶³

The richness of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta, unknown to the West as well as the major part of the East, is a hidden pearl among the scholars of ruhanutha in the world.⁶⁴ The richness and the uniqueness of this ruhanutha consists in its liturgical nature and indigenous characteristics. According to the nature of the Chaldeo-Indian ruhanutha, it has no other means of devotions apart from the life of the Edta based on liturgical life, with which the

entire life of the Nazranies was well integrated.

Mesihite Community of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta at Present

Rome is well aware of the present condition of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta. The words of John Paul II: "I am not only thinking of your Church in terms of members, statistics and the outstanding activities of each of your Eparchies, but I am contemplating the rich spiritual life that exists there in."⁶⁵ "The rich spiritual life" cited above reveal the fact that Chaldeo-Indian Edta inherits the divine life, Mesiha handed over to the human being through the Ruha d' Qudsa. The existence of the divine life is not a quality of that Edta, rather it is the very life-giving fruits of that community. All these elements together could be called the personality, sacramentally developed, of the Chaldeo-Indian Edta. Pope John Paul II senses the above mentioned life-giving force as a marvel of mesihite witness in fidelity to its primitive faith and the legitimate traditions of the Edta, which is Eastern and authentically Indian.⁶⁶

V

Conclusion

The Works of the Ruha d' Qudsa in the Chaldeo-Indian Edta

The experience of Ruha d' Qudsa, is emphasised very much in the sacraments among the Chaldeo-Indians. Ruhanutha is the work of Ruha

61. Rom. 12: 3, 6.

62. Eph. 4:7.

63. Vat. II. OE 5.

64. Vat. II. UR 14.

65. The Speech of Pope John Paul II about the Liturgical Renewal in the Oriental Churches According to the Spirit of II Vatican Council, No. 7.

66. The speech of John Paul II delivered on the Occasion of the Ad Limina Visit of Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Hierarchs, Sept. 1980, No. 2.

d' Qudsa in the liturgical assembly. The mesihite understanding of creation and man's eschatological destiny is inseparable from ruhanutha. In the mesalhanutha (divinization) of mankind, the Son and the Ruha are inseparable.⁶⁷

Ruha d' Qudsa reveals not himself, but the Son. It is clear in the annunciation and Incarnation. The Son has given us "the first fruits of the Ruha", writes Athanasius; "so that we may be transformed into sons of God".⁶⁸ Thus if it is through Ruha that meltha (word) became man, it is also through the Ruha that true life reaches all men. The Ruha transforms the mesihite community into the Body of Mesiha.

The communion of men with Meihā through the Ruha d' Qudsa represent the same spiritual experience and reality, of course in different ways. The Etta is a communion in God and with God since Ruha d' Qudsa is working from the beginning of creation onwards, the very life-giving principle is horizontally present in human beings. Such a working of the Ruha d' Qudsa was emphasised in the Chaldeo-Indian Etta, and it was exercised in the individual Etta through the parish councils and liturgical life.⁶⁹ Such a life can be called liturgical life. Hence liturgical ruhanutha.

The Ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta at Present

The different ecclesiological approaches to the administration of the

Etta are cause of crisis in the Chaldeo-Indian Etta at present. Till the 16th century there was only one ecclesiology in the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.⁷⁰ Hence one liturgy and one ruhanutha.

The western understanding of the Etta remained closed to their own conceptional and legalistic conclusions and the oriental Etta of India was "converted" to that of the Western type.⁷¹ The pneumatological stress of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta was replaced by the authoritarian and institutional Etta. The consequence was the rule of political power over horizontal working of the Ruha d' Qudsa. This caused the liturgical deformation and spiritual chaos among the Nazranies. But the long tradition of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta helped them to be faithful to their ruhanutha till 1960s.⁷² In short, the western ecclesiology and popular pieties together with the promoters of them among the sons of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta itself, are grieving the Ruha d' Qudsa of God,⁷³ who has marked Nazranies with his seal for an authentic ruhanutha.

When the Holy See asked the Syrians of India to restore genuine and authentic liturgy, ecclesial autonomy and ruhanutha, they began to create new forms of liturgy and a "national church" with the mark of Indianization.⁷⁴ It is this force that caused the restoration-renewal to be in jeopardy. "The sons of the world" are more prudent than the holy See.⁷⁵ Hence there is a time lag in the

67. Jn. 16:13.

68. Athanasius, *On Incarnation and Against Aryans*, 8: PG 26, 997 a.

69. P. J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 96.

70. *Idem*. pp. 101ff.

71. Xavier Koodapuzha, *Faith and Communion of the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians*, Kottayam 1982, pp 109ff.

72. V. Pathikulangara, *Chaldeo-Indian Liturgy I: Introduction*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 114-145.

73. Eph. 4:30.

74. V. Pathikulangara, *Chaldeo-Indian Liturgy I: Introduction*, p. 118.

75. Leo III, *Orientalium Dignitas Ecclesiarum*, 1894.

restoration of the identity of the ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

The vertical colonization, or rather the politically minded intervention of the Western Etta in the affairs of the Syrians extinguishes the horizontal workings of the Ruha d' Qudsa in their Etta.⁷⁶ Thus colonization prevails in the liturgical life of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta.

Another impact of the western intervention is the presence of clericalism among the Nazranies.⁷⁷ The priesthood among the Nazranies was pneumatologically established⁷⁸ and this pneumatological nature of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta should be restored.

A Genuine and Authentic Ruhanutha

Genuine and authentic ruhanutha of the Chaldeo-Indian Etta could be found in its original charism. Namely, the Mar Walah-faith experience of Mar Thoma and the sound tradition of his followers till 16th century. The Chaldeo-Indian Etta maintained its sacramental structure and canonical discipline as Thoma Margam and as an ecclesiological system. Such an approach is for the spiritualistic individualism and popularism among the Syrians. But the Thoma Margam was codified from the Margam of Ruha. To arrive at the authentic mesihite life, the liturgical life of the Etta should be efficacious in the life

of the Nazranies. This is the mind of Vatican II too.⁷⁸

The hierarchy should be at the service of the community to discern the true spirits.⁸⁰ All the popular pieties and private devotions should be eliminated in such a way that the real faith might be increased by the life of the Ruha originating from the liturgy of the Etta.

Realized Mesalhanutha in the Chaldeo-Indian Etta

The realized mesalhanutha (malahanutha) (malahanutha-divinization) or rather ruhanutha (spirituality), is not only a reality of the future, but a present participation in the divine life accessible in Mesiha through the work of the Ruha d' Qudsa in the liturgy of the Etta. A deep understanding of the Chaldaic liturgical tradition shows the importance of the work of the Ruha d' Qudsa and the nature of hope in the resurrection.

It is the same theme the Syrian monastic ruhanutha has for its origin. Essentially the monastic ruhanutha among the Syrians is same as the realized mesalhanutha of the Etta.⁸¹ In particular, this realized mesalhanutha is the realization of the heavenly Kingdom⁸² on earth that is, the recognition of God's Fatherhood and fraternal sawthaputha⁸³ of mankind handed by Mesiha through the works of the Ruha d' Qudsa.

Kuriakose Elias Vadaketh

76. P. J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Sryo-Malabar Church*, p. 93.

77. V. Pathikulangara, *Resurrection Life and Renewal*, p. 292.

78. T. Puthiakunnel, *op. cit.* p. 60.

79. Vat. II. SC 13.

80. 1 Tim. 4: 7-12

81. *The Church I loved*, ed. by J. Madey - G. Kanirakath, Kottayam, pp. 71ff.

82. Mk. 1:15; 2 Cor. 6:16; Lk. 17:21; 1:31; Mt. 16:28.

83. Gn. 20:31; 2 Cor. 13:14.

The List of the Bishops of the Thomas Christians

(continuation)

A. The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

1. Baselios Mar Thoma Mathews I, Catholicos of the East (1975-)
2. Mathews Mar Coorilos, Quilon, Catholicos designate (1953-)
3. Daniel Mar Philoxenos, Thumpamon (1953-)
4. Youhanon Mar Severios, Cochin (1966-)
5. Philipose Mar Theophilos, Ankamaly & Bombay (1966-)
6. Thomas Mar Timotheos, Malabar (1966-)
7. Geevarghese Mar Ostatheos, Niranam (1975-)
8. Paulose Mar Gregorios, Delhi (1975-)
9. Thomas Mar Macarios, North America (1975-)
10. Stephanos Mar Theodosios, Calcutta (1975-)
11. Joseph Mar Pachomios, Kandanatt (1975-)
12. Mathews Mar Barnabas, Idukki (1978-)
13. Youhanon Mar Athanasios (1978-1980)
14. Yacob Mar Polycarp, Cochin Assistant (1978-)
15. Geevarghese Mar Dioscoros, Trivandrum (1978-)
16. Zacharias Mar Dionysius, Madras (1978-)
17. Mathews Mar Epiphianos, Quilon Assistant (1985-)
18. Philipose Mar Eusebios, Thumpamon Assistant (1985-)
19. Thomas Mar Athanasios, Chengannoor (1985-)
20. Geevarghese Mar Ivanios, Kottayam (1985-)
21. Paulose Mar Melitios, Kunnankulam (1985-)

B. The Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church

1. Baselios Paulose II, Catholicos of the East (1975-)
2. Abraham Mar Clemis, Chingavanam (1951-)
3. Paulose Mar Athanasios, Evangelistic Association (1973-)
4. Thomas Mar Divannasios, Ankamaly (1974-)
5. Geevarghese Mar Gregorios, Kottayam (1974-)
6. Kuriakose Mar Coorilos, Niranam-Quilon (1974-)
7. Yacob Mar Julios, Patriarchal Churches and Monasteries (1975-)
8. Thomas Mar Ostatheos, Cochin (1975-)
9. Samuel Mar Philoxenos (1975-1985)
10. Jacoub Mar Timotheos, Theological Seminary (1979-)
11. Thomas Mar Theophilos, Delhi (1979-)
12. Philipose Mar Ivanios, Idukki (1979-)
13. Abraham Mar Severios, Ankamaly Assistant (1982-)
14. Benjamin Mar Ostatheos, Patriarchal Churches Assistant (1984-)
15. Youhanon Mar Philoxenos, Malabar (1985-)

C. The Thozhiyoor Syrian Church (1772 onwards)¹

1. Mar Coorilos	I	(1772-1800)
2. Mar Coorilos	II	(1794-1808)
3. Mar Philoxenos	I	(1807-1811)
4. Mar Philoxenos	II ²	(1811-1829)
5. Mar Coorilos	III ³	(1829-1856)
6. Mar Coorilos	IV ⁴	(1856-1888)
7. Mar Athanasios	I	(1883- ?)
8. Mar Coorilos	V ⁵	(1892-1935)
9. Mar Athanasios	II	(1917-1927)
10. Mar Coorilos	VI ⁶	(1935-1947)
11. Mar Coorilos	VII ⁷	(1948-1967)
12. Mar Philoxenos	III ⁸	(1967-1977)
13. Mar Coorilos	VIII ⁹	(1977-)

-
1. It is a very small Christian community, mostly centred around Thozhiyoor (Anjoor) near Trichur in Kerala. In 1772 the Antiochene Jacobite Bishop ordained a certain Kattumangatt Ramban and named him Mar Coorilos. This ordination took place without the permission of the Malankara Metropolitan Mar Dionysius I (= Mar Thoma VI). So he was banned from Travancore and Cochin. He then went to Thozhiyoor which was then not under the jurisdiction of the kings of Travancore and Cochin. This church is strictly following the Antiochene liturgical traditions.
 2. In 1815 he ordained a bishop for the Jacobite Church and named him Mar Dionysius II (Pulikkottil). In 1816, when Mar Dionysius II died, Mar Philoxenos II ordained Dionysius III (Punnatra) for the Jacobite church and both of them ruled together the Jacobite church for some time. It was at this period that the Malankara Jacobite church came into closer contact with the Anglican missionaries. In 1818 both these bishops took part in the discussions with the Anglicans at Mavelikara. When Dionysius III died in 1825, Philoxenos ordained Dionysius IV (Chäppatt) for the Malankara Jacobite Church.
 3. He was ordained by the Jacobite bishop Dionysius IV (Chäppatt). He took part in the Mavelikara Synod in 1836, where the Jacobite Church broke its relations with the Anglicans.
 4. He was ordained by the Malankara Jacobite Bishop, Mathews Mar Athanasios (1843- 77). Coorilos took part in the ordination of Mar Athanasios.
 5. In 1894 Thozhiyoor bishops ordained Titus I, the bishop of the Reformed Jacobites (later known as Mar Thoma Syrian Church).
 6. He was ordained by Titus II of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.
 7. He was ordained by Yuhanon Mar Thoma of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.
 8. In 1977 he entered into full communion with the Catholic church; Only a few of his followers became catholic.
 9. He was ordained by the Mar Thoma Metropolitan.

D. The Mar Thoma Syrian Church (1842 onwards)¹

1. Mathews Mar Athanasios ²	(1842-1877)
2. Thomas Mar Athanasios ³	(1868-1893)
3. Titus I Mar Thoma ⁴	(1894-1910)
4. Titus II Mar Thoma ⁵	(1899-1944)
5. Abraham Mar Thoma ⁶	(1917-1947)
6. Mathews Mar Athanasios	(1937-1973)
7. Yuhanon Mar Thoma ⁷	(1937-1976)
8. Thomas Mar Athanasios	(1953-1984)
9. Alexander Mar Thoma ⁸	(1953-)
10. Philipose Mar Chrysostom	(1953-)
11. Joseph Mar Irenaeus	(1975-)
12. Isho Mar Timotheos	(1975-)
13. Zacharias Mar Theophilos	(1980-)

1. This church originated as a result of the connection of the Malankara Jacobite church with the Anglican Missionaries. Because of the Protestant influence the Antiochen liturgy was mutilated and reformed in accordance with the protestant principles. In the beginning the group was known as the reformed party. Later they adopted the present name.
2. He was the first Malankara bishop who was ordained by an Antiochene Jacobite Patriarch. He went to Mardin and became bishop and came back. He had friction with Mar Dionysius IV (Chëppatt), the then ruling Malankara Jacobite bishop. In 1852 the royal judgement was in favour of Mar Athanasios and he ruled the Malankara church upto 1876, in which year the Antiochene Jacobite Patriarch, Peter excommunicated him and he lost eventually his authorities in the church.
3. He was ordained by Mathews Mar Athanasios, and Thozhiyoor Mar Coorilos (in 1868) He ruled the reformed Syrians from 1877 onwards. He had a lot of law suits upto 1889. The judgements were all against him and he retired to Maramon, his native place.
4. He was ordained by the Thozhiyoor bishops.
5. Thozhiyoor bishop also took part in the ordination. It was at the time of Titus II Mar Thoma that the reformed syrians adopted the name Mar Thoma Syrian church.
6. Thozhiyoor bishop also took part in the ordination.
7. In his ordination the Thozhiyoor bishop took part. And when the Thozhiyoor bishop died, Yuhanon Mar Thoma ordained a bishop in 1966.
8. When Mar Philoxenos III of Thozhiyoor became Catholic, his successor in the Thozhiyoor church was ordained by the Mar Thoma Metropolitan.

E. The Malankara Syrian Catholic Church (1930 onwards)¹

1. Mar Ivanios ²	(1930-1953)
2. Mar Theophilos ³	(1930-1955)
3. Mar Severios ⁴	(1937-1955)
4. Mar Dioscoros ⁵	(1939-1943)
5. Zacharias Mar Athanasios	(1954-1977)
6. Benedict Mar Gregorios ⁶	(1953-)
7. Paulose Mar Philoxenos II ⁷	(1977-)
8. Isaac Mar Youhanon	(1978-)
9. Cyril Mar Baselios	(1978-)
10. Lawrence Mar Ephraem	(1980-)

1. In 1930 a few Orthodox Syrian Christians under the leadership of Mar Ivanios, an Orthodox bishop came into full communion with the Roman Church. Later, people from the various Christian churches and communities joined them and today we have the Malankara Syrian Catholic Church.
2. He was ordained in the Orthodox church in 1929 by the Second Cătholicos. In 1929 Mar Ivanios and Dionysius VI (Vattasseril) enthroned the third Cătholicos. In 1930 Mar Ivanios became Catholic. He was a leading figure in establishing the Catholicate in Malankara. Mar Ivanios became the first Malankara Metropolitan of the Malankara Catholic Church. He was the Archbishop of Trivandrum and Head of the Malankara Catholic Church of the See of St. Thomas. Through him the Malankara orthodox church entered into the modern ecumenical field. In this century we do not find anywhere in Christianity such a successful ecumenical movement. When he entered into full communion with the bishop of Rome, the whole Malankara church was accepted by Rome as it is without any change or alteration. Hence one can note that the ecumenical activities initiated by the Orthodox Church through Mar Ivanios was a great success of Orthodoxy. The growth and development of the Malankara Catholic Church is the growth and development of the Malankara Orthodox church.
3. He became a bishop of the orthodox church in 1929 and in 1930 he joined the Catholic Church with Mar Ivanios. He administered the eparchy of Tiruvalla from 1933-1950.
4. He became a bishop of the orthodox church in 1933 and joined the Malankara Catholic church in 1937. He was apostolic administrator (1938-1950) and bishop (1950-1955) of Tiruvalla.
5. He became a bishop of the Jacobite Syrian Church in 1926; in 1939 he joined the Malankara Catholic Church.
6. Benedict Mar Gregorios is the successor of Mar Ivanios as Head of the Malankara Catholic Church and the Malankara Metropolitan of the entire Malankara Catholic church of the See of St. Thomas. He is Archbishop of Trivandrum and at present Vice President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India.
7. He joined the Malankara Catholic Church in 1977 from the Thozhiyoor Church.

(to be continued)

G. Chediath

The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (1985) and the Oriental Churches in India

The Holy Father Pope John Paul II announced on January 25, 1985 in the Basilica of St. Paul outside the walls in Rome that an extraordinary Synod of Bishops would be convened in Rome in 1985 itself. His Holiness made it clear that the purpose of the Synod is to make an evaluation of the implementation of the decrees of Vatican II.

His Eminence Wladyslaw Cardinal Rubin, the Prefect of the S. C. for the Oriental Churches published an article in the "Osservatore Romano" of January 9, 1985, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the promulgation of the "Decree on the Eastern Churches". His Eminence explained briefly how far the S. C. for the Oriental Churches was trying to implement the decree for the last twenty years.

Here is an attempt to turn the attention of the responsible persons to the Indian Oriental Reality. One may be interested to know how far the decree was implemented in the case of the two Oriental Churches.

As is known to all there are three Catholic Individual Churches in India, the ancient Apostolic Church of the Thomas Christians (the Syro-Malabar Church), the Latin Church from the 16th century onwards, and the Malankara Catholic Church since the historic Reunion of Mar Ivanios, Metropolitan of Bethany in 1930. Since 1886 the Latin Church is extended territorially throughout India, while the other Oriental Catholic Churches are restricted to a little above than 0.47% of the Indian subcontinent. The Church of the Thomas Christians had originally jurisdiction throughout India: the bishops of this church were the "Metropolitans of All India" and the Archdeacon, "Archdeacon of All India." When India was divided into latin dioceses the ancient apostolic Church was restricted between the rivers Pampa

and Bharathapuzha is Kerala to a very small piece of land in the Indian subcontinent.

After the independence of India in 1947 one can find free movement of the people in the various states in India; and naturally the Orientals in India also migrated to the various parts of India. The non catholic oriental churches extended their pastoral care to these immigrants and have established their own hierarchies, and through their communities they have undertaken the Christian witnessing and evangelisation. But the Oriental Catholics were and are canonically forbidden to take care of their faithful outside the restricted territory and as a church they are forbidden to do missionary activities in the vast Indian subcontinent.

The Second Vatican Council has clearly shown the equality of the various churches or Rites in the Catholic Communion. These Individual churches are equally entrusted to the pastoral care of the bishop of Rome. All have equal rights and obligations. The Council stood for *Unity in Diversity* in the Catholic Church. The Council made it clear that Unity is not uniformity, diversity is not division and Catholic Church is not exclusively the latin church, but is one of the churches; and that the Catholic Church is the communion of Individual Churches united in Faith, Sacraments and Sacred Hierarchy. It clearly taught that the orientals and latins should respect the various particular traditions in the Universal Church, preserve and foster them. It decreed also that in cases of deviations, the churches should come back to the pristine purity and to the ancient traditions.

The Indian Context

In India the ancient apostolic church of the Thomas Christians (the Syro-Malabar Church) underwent a lot of mutilation and latinisation.

This church is trying to regain its identity and to grow to the status of a full Individual Church. The same is true regarding the Malankara Catholic Church. The following things have to be done immediately: (1) An Individual Church should have an ecclesiastical Head with its proper Synod. (2) The two Individual churches should have the right to look after the orientals wherever they are. A Rite is not for the territory, but for the Individuals. (3) Orientals as Orientals should be free to do evangelical work; this is an inalienable right of any church.

The non catholic churches in India – the Orthodox, the Jacobite, the Marthomite, the C. S. I, – are closely watching what the Latins in India and the universal church are doing to the Oriental Catholic Churches. They are test cases for the non-catholics. If the two oriental catholic churches in India are treated by some of the latins as unavoidable evil, just tolerated as second class churches, appendices to the latin church, how can they dialogue with the latin church? When they find that the Eastern Churches in India in communion with Rome cannot administer the essential pastoral care for their own faithful outside the narrow restricted territory and are unjustly hindered from organic growth, will they even think of joining a latin dominated Catholic Church? Looking at the Oriental Catholic Churches, the Orthodox Churches should feel confident that in the Catholic Communion their autonomy and autocephaly are fully respected. It is not enough that we give evidence of our assurance in paper, which we have enough and more. They should realise it unequivocally in the life of the oriental catholic churches in India. On several occasions one could hear from sympathetic and ecumenically oriented Orthodox and Jacobites that in the Catholic Communion their autonomy will not be respected. From

the history of Christianity in India, one can note that it was the Malankara Orthodox Church which initiated the ecumenical discussions in 1928 through their representative Mar Ivanios of Bethany. It was they who partially succeeded in establishing the communion. Now the Orthodox Church in India wants to make it perfect and full. But they would enter into communion only on the basis of equality of churches accepting their Individuality and authentic existence and autonomy. The Latin hierarchy in India, through their sarcastic and condemnatory verdicts on the Orientals have created an ecumenical scandal and has very much offended the feelings of the Orientals in India. Some of the Latin bishops do not want to accept the permanent existence of the Oriental churches in India. They want to explain away the clear teachings of Vatican II regarding the Orientals.

Now the questions one may be prone to ask are the following:

1. Are we serious in our ecumenical discussions?
2. Are we prepared to accept plurality and diversity in the life of the church or we are upholding that unity is uniformity and diversity is division?
3. In the ecumenical era, can we legitimately uphold the outdated principle, "one territory, one bishop, one jurisdiction"?
4. In a vast country like India, is it not legitimate to permit all ecclesial traditions to foster, so that the non christians may have a chance to come into contact with the various forms of christianity?
5. Should the Oriental Catholic Churches in India continue to exist or not?
6. Should these Oriental Catholic Churches in India be limited in a tiny part of India or should they be permitted to grow organically?
7. Is it not sinful not to permit the

An Investigation into the Theology of the 'Resurrection Service' In the Syro-Malankara Church

Introduction

1. Clarification of the Term

The expression 'Resurrection Service' does not comprehend in itself the whole Easter Service. The Easter Service itself is composed of The Divine Office of the Day and the Service of the Procession of the Cross (The Service proper to the Great Sunday) and the Holy Qurbana. (These items will be indicated in detail below). The Service identified as The Resurrection Service here is that small Procession of the Cross from the 'tomb' to the front of the altar inside the veiled sanctuary. It includes also the revalatory proclamation from the unveiled Sanctuary.

2. Some Introductory Notes on the Text and the Structure of the Easter Service

As is known, the Malankara Catholic Church follows the Syrian Antiochene Liturgical Tradition. Com-

Indians to come to know about the various forms of Christianity, especially when these forms exist in India and are suitable to the Indian soil?

The success or failure of ecumenism and evangelization in India depends on the answer to these questions.

T. Vellilamthadam

mon with all Churches of the Eastern Tradition, the Feast of Easter is the 'Great Feast' day of the whole Liturgical Year. Hence the Easter is the central point on which the whole annual and Weekly and daily liturgical cycle moves.

3. The Fanqito and the M'ade 'dono¹

The text of the Divine Office of the Yearly Feasts is known as *Fanqito* and the Service Manual of the Feasts of the Year is identified as *M'ade 'dono* among the Syrians of the Antiochene Tradition. *M'ade 'dono* is also known as "the Processional", because most of these liturgical celebrations have a liturgical procession as a very important item. The prayers of these texts are of ancient origin; some are of the 4th-5th centuries! However, the text was codified and published in their present form only in the second half of the last century.² The Indian Jacobites published more than one editions of this book from Pampakkuda and the name given to the book is *ktôbo dam'ade'dôno d-hûdro santônoyo* (= Service book of the Feasts of Yearly Cycles). Practically, this is the book used for the Resurrection service (for the whole service of the Procession of the Cross also) by all the Malankara Churches of the Syrian Antiochene Tradition. Our present study is dependent on the 1965 edition,

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1. *M'ade 'dono* derives from *ad'ide*, Feasts, and means 'The Book of Feasts (Festivals). Cfr. Hambye s. j. "La Semaine Sainte Dans L'Eglise, Syro-Malankara, *L'Orient Syrien*, vol. 3, (1958), 209. *M'ade 'dono* is the last two words of the book named *qtobo d-takso-d-ide idtonoyo ak 'yodo d-i'dto suryoto d-metkane-M'ade 'idôno* (= the book of the Ecclesiastical Liturgical Festival Ceremonies according to the Traditions of the Syrian Church)
 2. *Fanqito*: the present Syriac version was published in 1886 in Mossul; the *M'ade 'dono* in 1876 in Beirut. cfr. Hambye, op. cit. p. 210.

3. The Structure of the Easter Service

A. A General Structure

The Easter Service begins with the Ramsa of the Easter Sunday on the Saturday Evening (eve of the Easter Sunday).

The whole Easter Service has three constitutive elements:

- 1) The Divine Office of the Easter Feast.
- 2) The Service of the *sûyôgo d-slibô* (Procession of the Cross)
- 3) Holy Qurbono

1) *Divine Office* : elements :

a. Ramsa b. Sûthôro c. Lelyo
d. Sapro e. The Office of the Hours of the Day

2) *Procession of the Cross* :

The Service proper of the Easter Sunday

This service is celebrated in between the *Hours of Leliyo*.

3) *Holy Qurbono* :

At the end of the Service of the Procession of the Cross.

4) *Structure of the Service of the Cross*

As already mentioned above, the Service of the Procession of the Cross is conducted in between the Hours of the Leliyo. Hence, the Leliyo has two sections as well as the Service of the Procession of the Cross itself. Hence, the structure could be drawn as follows :

Leliyo-A-First Section:

From the First *Qauma* to the Hallel and commemoration of the departed Fathers of the Church in the third *qauma*.

Procession of the Cross A

First Service: Resurrection of the Cross.

Except the final revelation and proclamation, everything is performed inside the veiled sanctuary.

Leliyo-B-Second Section:

From the Eniyono (Lk 1,46-55) to the Praise of Angels and concluding *qauma*.

Procession of the Cross-B: Second

Section:

- a) The Service of Peace-A
- b) The Procession of the Cross: the big procession outside the Church
- c) Exaltation of the Cross.
- d) Sharing of Peace :
Service of Peace-B (kissing the resurrected cross)

The Structure we have just seen indicates that the 'Resurrection Service' (i.e., the First Service of the Procession of the Cross) comes in between the first section of the Leliyo and the second section of the Leliyo.

5. The Resurrection Service

The topic of our present study, is the first service of the *sûyôgo d-slibô*.

Here, a word about the name *sûyôgo d-slibô* will be quite opportune and informative. The celebration is given this name, i.e., the Procession of the Cross, most probably because there are two processions of the Cross during the Easter Service: the first, the short one, from the 'tomb' to the front of the altar in the sanctuary and the 'Revelation', and the second, the one around the Church. There is a historical background too for this name. Already in the fourth century Etheria reports of a 'procession' as part of the Easter celebration in Jerusalem.³ The subject of our present

3. Cfr. Egeria: Diary of a pilgrimage, chap. 39 (tr. and annotated by George B. Gingsras), in *Ancient Christian Writers Series*, no. 38, ed. Johannes Quasten et al., Newman Press N. Y., 1970, p. 115.

deliberation is the first short procession in the service.

Having seen the structure of the Easter Service and identified the 'Resurrection Service', now we turn to a theological understanding of the service.

6. A Theological Understanding of the Resurrection Service

The present study is based on the biblical references and allusions in the prayers themselves. No patristics have been drawn into, although truly that would enrich the search.

A. THE RUBRICS

i. The 'Resurrecting' Service (the small Procession)

Towards the end of the Hallel in the Third Qauma of Leliyo, the celebrant (priest) and his assistants enter the sanctuary and wear the official liturgical vestments. The celebrant after incensing the 'buried' Cross at 'the tomb' 'resurrects' the Cross, adorns it with red stole and covers with crimson purple and carries it to the front of the altar and places it on the mnortho (a wooden stand). The incensing and the 'resurrecting' is accompanied by a quqlion (a prayer in hymn). While placed on the mnortho, on both sides of the cross are fixed burning candles. Standing before the Cross the celebrant completes the prescribed prayers. All the while the sanctuary remains veiled.

ii. The Revelation and Proclamation

At the end of the prayers before the cross inside the veiled sanctuary the celebrant holds the adorned cross high in both his hands and turns towards the congregation for proclamation of the good news. Burning candles, marbausa, etc., are held on

both sides of the Cross; the cross is incensed by a server. The sanctuary veil is drawn aside. From the open sanctuary the celebrant proclaims:

"Brethren, I proclaim you a fresh news, Christ is risen from the tomb and has fled back his enemies"⁴

To this, the congregation responds:

"We believe and confess that he is truly risen".

B. THE THEOLOGY OF THE SAID SERVICES

The theology is made out mainly from the prayers themselves that accompany the services (rubrics)

I. The FACT (EVENT) of the Resurrection of Christ

1. The Resurrected Cross is adorned in crimson purple. The theology of this practice is indicated in the text itself by alluding to Is. 63, 1 ff., which reads:

"Who is this that comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozra, he that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?"

"It is I, announcing vindication mighty to save" (RSVCE)

Titro-Isaiah is speaking in figurative language. Here is an apocalyptic oracle of the prophet in a dialogue form. Edom is also interpreted as representing every enemy of Yahweh and of His people.⁵ Yahweh is pictured as the conqueror, coming victorious, wearing dresses bathed in the blood of the enemies. Hence, He has brought the liberation of the people too. By alluding to this text, the liturgical practice of covering the 'resurrected Cross' in crimson linen, the church proclaims the Resurrection of Jesus as his total victory over his

4. All the English versions (citations) of the prayers of the Service are my own; from the Syriac Text.

5. Cfr. *Vedapusthakabhashyam* (Malayalam), Christian Literature Society, Tiruvalla 1979, p. 512; *JBC*, vol. I, TPI, Bangalore, 1972, p. 384, n. 62.

and his people's enemies — victory having annihilated their enemies.

It must be noted that it is not simply his victory over death alone. It is victory over the enemies that put the people in bondage (cfr. 1 Cor 15, 26-27).

This aspect of total victory and total annihilation of his enemies is joyously sung by the Church in the first quqlion itself—while opening the 'tomb'. The quqlion reads:

stanza one:

God will rise up and His enemies
will be scattered
hallelujah and hallelujah
His haters will flee away from
His presence.

stanza two:

Like smoke shall they vanish away
Hallelujah and Hallelujah
The wicked shall perish before
the Lord.

stanza three:

The Lord awoke as from sleep
Hallelujah and Hallelujah
Like a man mad with wine.

stanza four:

And He put His adversaries to rout
Hallelujah and Hallelujah
And made them the
contempt of the earth

ii. Cross: Ark of the Covenant.

a) *The historical context of Numb: 10, 35*

Stanza one of the quqlion quoted above is a free (adjusted) citation from Peshitta Numb. 10, 35. The historical context of this part (10, 11-36) of the JE Tradition in the framework of P is the peoples' leaving Sinai and their march through the desert for which Hobab served as the "eye of the Caravan". They carried the Ark of the Covenant in the front of the Caravan. And,

"Whenever the Ark set out, Moses said, "Arise O Lord, and let thy enemies be scattered; and let that hate thee flee before thee."

And when it rested, he said, "Return O Lord, to the ten thousand, thousands of Israel." (Numb. 10, 35 - 36).

The sentence "Arise O Lord" that your enemies be scattered" is a fragment of an ancient poem connected with the liturgy of the Ark.⁶ It preserves the oldest tradition in the pentateuch linking the Ark with the movements of Yahweh.

b. *Significance of Num. 10:35 to the Resurrection Service.*

1) Cross: Ark of the Covenant.

The Resurrected Cross signifies and represents the new and final Covenant God made and fulfilled through His Son Jesus Christ. Cross symbolizes the fulfilment of God's Covenant with mankind.

Hence, all the sign values of the Ark of the Covenant are equally applicable to the Resurrected Cross: it is the sign of victory,⁷ of peace, of protection etc.,

2) The Victory of Jesus by the Cross is won by God. Both the Peshitta and the liturgical text use the passive netbadrum - a divine passive which indicates that it is God who scatters the enemies.

3) Among the changes made on the Peshitta text, two are of greater significance: a) the change of indicative imperative qum (arise, stand up etc) to indicative future nequm. The implication is that the eschatological victory of God has been realized, yet the full culmination of the victory is still expected. The resurrection of Jesus is transhistorical and is not resurrection.

b) The change from 'Lord' (Yahweh) to 'God' (Aloho) is indicative of

6. Cfr. JBC, op. cit. p. 90. no. 29; Vedapusthakabhashyam, op. cit. p. 235.

7. 1 Cor 1, 8; Gal. 6, 14; Jn 12, 32 etc.

the faith of the Church. Jesus risen is God who has won victory over his enemies. The eschatological victory of God over his enemies is realized in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the 'resurrected cross' represents and symbolizes it.

iii. Stanza two: **The Vanishing and perishing of the wicked**

The Victory of God in Jesus' resurrection is still further asserted in yet stronger terminology borrowed from Peshitta Ps. 37: 20.

Ps. 37 is wisdom Psalm wherein maxims are loosely collected and joined to form an alphabetic Psalm.⁸ The 'wicked' who 'perish' and 'vanish like smoke' are the infidels—those who are faithless to the Covenant (see, again the Covenant motif is brought in). This reference to Ps. 37: 20 helps us understand that in the ecclesial context two features are implied:

a) to those who were faithless to the baptismal covenant, the 'resurrection service' (resurrection of Jesus) is not one of joy, but a time of judgment and chastisement; b) in the context of the early church where baptism preceded the Easter Service, it means that entrance into baptismal covenant is entrance into the victory of Jesus' resurrection.

iv. Stanzas 3 & 4: **Total annihilation of enemies**

These two stanzas of the quqlion is an exact citation of Peshitta Ps. 78: 65–66, except for the last two words.⁹ Ps 78 is an historical Psalm which describes Yahweh's goodness in spite of Israel's ingratitude. The uniqueness of Ps 78 distinguishing it from other historical Psalms as 105, 114, 136 etc. is its interpretative character. It is more interested in the interpretation of history than its mere recital.¹⁰ The

expressions in vs 65–66 are very strong indications in full force of the awakening of the Lord and his striking the Philistines (cfr. 1 Sam. 5, 6–12).¹¹

The Church that celebrates the resurrection of Jesus views the event as the mighty thrashing of Jesus in full force and defeating the enemies of his people and fulfilling His promise. The resurrection of Jesus is the total annihilation of His and His people's enemies (cfr. 1 Cor. 15, 26–27). This theme is sung again in Isaiahan and Apocalyptic terms in the first stanza of the quqoyo (a hymn) after the Seder in the Service of Resurrection. The quqoyo sings:

"The mighty one rose up in great power from the tomb,

The prophet was astonished and approached him and asked:

"Why is it seen, Lord, Your cloak is reddish and your side wounded and palm pierced?"

"I have trodden the winepress in the death-pit

Boldly have I faced the danger and have bathed in blood, Hallelujah—I rose up and am alive".

This hymn is a composite of direct allusions and indirect references from, mainly, Isaiah, St John, Revelation and Romans. The figure of the suffering servant (pierced hand: Is 53, 5), the open side (Jn 19, 35) etc. have become the sign of the victorious warrior, and even of the victorious king (the reddish overcoat: Is. 63, 1; Jn 19,35), who has trampled down alone the enemies. This is the very specific of the symbols; he is victorious by himself. The wounded side and the pierced hand are, here, not signs of suffering, but of victory.

The Church adores the victorious Christ in the exaltation of the Cross, an item of the Service of the Procession of the Cross.

8. Cfr. L. Sabourin, *Thd Psalms, Their origin and meaning*, vol. 2, TPI, Bangalore 1971, p. 255.

9. Yahb l-hun of Peshitta Ps 78,66 is changed to a'bod enun in the quqlion.

10. Cfr. L. Sabourin, *op. cit.*, p. 302 11. cfr. *JBC*, *op. cit.*, p. 590, no. 94.

Book Reviews

Die Syrischen Christen vom Tur 'Abdin by *Helga Anschutz* - Augustinus Verlag
Wurzburg 1984, pp. x-258.

In six chapters the author speaks in detail about the christians of Tur Abdin. The major part of the book is taken up by the IV chapter which is Documentation on the Syrian Christians of Tur Abdin. The author tries in this chapter to find out the present and historical significance of Tur Abdin. She divides the different places as mostly christian or mostly muslim or one time christian now Muslims populated and similar localities and goes into detail about them. Among these come also monasteries which are now inhabited or uninhabited.

The life of the christians in Tur Abdin who follow a christian aramaic culture (p. 160) has always been hand with wars, plundering, raids and their consequences and it still is such and therefore a lived faith is necessary to sustain their religious convictions. The text book knowledge of Christianity is not enough for this.

Many of These christians have migrated to West Europe looking for work which they find; others settle down there. Out of the 25000 Syrian Christians of Turkey who lived in Europe in 1982, the majority was from Tur Abdin. As a christian community there is not much of a christian presence today in Tur Abdin while it has become predominantly muslim. But it evokes memories of a glorious past.

The book serves to help the reader to have a general idea of the vicissitudes through which Tur Abdin and its christianity has passed through.

J. Koikakudy

Die Wustenvater des 20 Jahrhunderts by *Otto F. Meinardus*, Augustinus-Verlag
Wurzburg 1983, pp. 208.

The author of the book, an evangelical pastor in Germany, has been for a number of years in contact with the oriental monasticism, specially that of the Copts. In this book Dr. Meinardus deals with the Egyptian monasticism in its historic, sociological, psychological and archeological aspects.

In 12 chapters, the author takes us to the various important monasteries, bringing into relief particular aspects of the monasticism that is lived today in the middle East, specially in Egypt. As the author says, he has tried to put together his many sided experiences of the monastic lives in Egypt so

that we can have a general vision of their life (p. 7). They live far away from us; their orientation also is something very special. The book makes clear how the western mind has to travel back miles before we can think of accepting the Oriental brethren. Pope Schenuda for example, lived a monastic life before he was elected Patriarch of the Copts. They were preparing himself for his lofty office in the monastery. This has been a great example to the young of Egypt. The monasteries have served as meeting places of the religious groups where they have lived with the peace and joy and concord of the first christians. These priests and monks do not believe so much in the learning of the cities but in the spirit of Christ which gives them power over nature (p. 22).

In 12 different accounts of monasteries, the author considers a special aspect that is to be seen in each of them. This is done by going to the monasteries, speaking with them and experiencing personally their lives. The book is a rich mine of knowledge about the monastic life of the desert Fathers, mostly Egyptian.

The book makes interesting reading and is useful to those desirous of knowing about the ascetic life of the monasteries and churches today in Egypt.

J. Koikakudy

Mysticism in Medieval India by Shankar Gopal Tulpule, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1984 pp. xii-271, DM 78.

The book under review as the author himself says in the preface is the summary of a series of lectures given in the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg in the summer of 1980. It deals about the Mystics of Medieval India, but more in particular about those of the Marathi, Hindi and Kannada speaking regions. The author says that in taking the mystics of the Kannada speaking region, he covers generally those of the South.

While this assertion may partly be right, it would be a gross mistake to think that the Kannada Mystics exhaust all those of the South. It is true to a very great extent, however, that the main characteristic of the mystics of the South is Bhakti or devotion. Related to this is the viraha, separation of the soul from God.

While bhakti dominated the mysticism of the south, yoga and tantra is the characteristic of the mysticism of the North. This is true of Tulsidas, Tukaram, Kabir. Whether of the North or the south, religion, for the Mystic, is not a second hand matter, "religion made for him by others, inherited through tradition, formalised by imitation and retained by habit." It is for him something original, personal. This religion is not a dull habit but an active fever (12). It is the account of Tukaram or Kabir and not of Hinduism or Islam.

The realization of God and self makes the person equanimous. His desires come to an end. 'As a drop of water may not adhere to the leaf of a lotus, even so many sin never contaminate him'. Worship and sacrifice

are aspects of institutional religion. In mysticism religion becomes personal, absolutely.

The saints believed in God, they did not know him. Or better they did not know him intellectually, They need not have been 'educated' but they reached 'lofty heights of the attainment of God through anubuthi, experience. With biting sarcasm Tulpale says: It is not the California Mysticism', but heart religion. There are quacks and hypocrites who under the pretext of divines or sages sell such mysticism to those who are narrows and depressed and phobic. These people want relaxation, relief and what is offered for them is pleasure. True mysticism is restful; it is loving contemplation of God for which the necessary condition is total surrender.

In achieving this anubhuti, Tulpale speaks of the need of a Sadguru, a master who will lead a person to God. Seeing him is like seeing God. The Mystic gets an intuition of God, of reality. For this the mystic makes a pilgrimage (ch. ix) where he comes into contact with reality face to face. What is needed for this is Bhakti. Once God is realized and communion with him is established, the mystic forgets everything, also himself, He becomes one with God. The beautiful verses of Tukaram is a clear proof of the joy the mystic enjoys in this communion:

"In the pool of joy, the ripples also are of joy;
Joy is the soul, and joy is the body
The Fancy of the pregnant woman
reflects the craving of the child in the womb;
one is mirrored by the other
Like that, says Tuka, is He imprinted in me,
making me speak about the experience".

Mr. Tulpale has done a commendable job in bringing out the mysticism of medieval India through its representatives, knowledge of whom may be scanty to Indians themselves. The book is a rich mine of information. When people are looking for sortents to joy which unfortunately they mistake with pleasure, this book gives the correct notion that excitements from food or sex are fleeting and transitory and cannot be identified with joy which is spiritual. The book is warmly recommended to all seekers of happiness.

J. Koikakudy

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This book presents the papers and the statement of the Symposium on "The Identity of the Catholic Orientals of India" held at Paurastya Vidyāpīṭham (Pont. Oriental Institute of Religious Studies), Vadavathoor, Kottayam, on April 2-5, 1984. The main theme of the Symposium was the Ecclesial Identity of the Thomas Christians of India. The Thomas Christians of India have contributed, and are contributing, much to the growth of the Church in India. They feel co-responsible for the diffusion of the message of Christ in India. The papers reflect some of the aspects of a Church which has an apostolic origin.